ENCOUNTER

LITERATURE ARTS POLITICS

AFTER THE APOCALYPSE
The Editors

PAGES FROM A DIARY *Virginia Woolf*

LOOKING FOR INDIA *Denis de Rougemont*

THE WIND AT DJEMILA *Albert Camus*

THE HEAD OF A LEADER *Christopher Isherwood*

A POSTSCRIPT TO THE ROSENBERG CASE *Leslie A. Fiedler*

TWO STORIES *Dazai Osamu*

POEMS BY *Dr. Edith Sitwell* AND *C. Day Lewis*

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Editorial

After the Apocalypse

IS IT our fancy, or does this first issue of ENCOUNTER appear in a good season? Is there a breath of fresh air drifting through the fog which we have been accustomed to take for our normal atmosphere? Has the apocalypse we were waiting for come and gone—a pseudo-apocalypse of pseudo-prophets? Is it a time to remember that history moves to no end, but has many endings and as many beginnings?

Three men have died—Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin; and with them, the mythologies of an epoch. The last surviving fable was exposed only yesterday in Eastern Germany and Czechoslovakia, where real factory workers unambiguously dissociated themselves from a hypothetical Proletariat, achieving by that simple action what a thousand subtle arguments could not do: the destruction of the Marxist-Leninist creed. Now, perhaps, words will once again mean what they say, and we shall be spared the tedious sophistry by which despotism could pose as a higher form of freedom, murder as a supreme humanism. Now, perhaps, we shall no longer be plagued by the rhetoric of a messianic arrogance of the spirit which has blithely perpetrated so many hideous crimes against the flesh.

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PROBLEMS remain, of course, as they always do. The dark side of the moon may no longer be mistaken for the rising sun, but it is still there and still dark. And shadows move among us; almost too many to count and sometimes even hard to name. Indeed, it is possible that only now are we going to have the opportunity to experience those dilemmas which are blanketed under the phrase, "the crisis of our times," in all their fullness, their concreteness, their reality. The place of man and the arts in an industrial civilisation, the reconciliation of equality with liberty, the dominion of national pride in a world where the nation is plainly an anachronism, the intolerableness of hunger and degradation in a world that seems to have the resources to remove them—these problems survive the false solutions they provoked.

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APPEARING at this time, and amidst these problems, ENCOUNTER seeks to promote no "line," though its editors have opinions they will not hesitate to express. The Congress for Cultural Freedom, which sponsors this magazine, is made up of individuals of the most diverse views, as can be gathered from a mere listing of the names of its founding honorary chairmen: Benedetto Croce, John Dewey, Karl Jaspers, Salvador de Madariaga, Jacques Maritain, and Bertrand Russell. What caused them to come together? Two things: a love of liberty and a respect for that part of human endeavour that goes by the name of culture.

It is natural, therefore, that ENCOUNTER should try to represent both this community and this diversity; that it should regard literature and the arts as being values in themselves, in need of no ulterior justification; that it should be an international magazine, with a British and an American editor, and with the contributors to the first number coming from six countries; that it should aim, not at the slurring over of differences of opinion, but rather at the uninhibited exploration of them.

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AFTER the apocalypse comes—another day. Just another day. But our own.

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Virginia Woolf

Pages from a Diary

Sunday, July 25th, 1926

At first I thought it was Hardy, and it was the parlourmaid, a small thin girl, wearing a proper cap. She came in with silver cakestands and so on. Mrs. Hardy talked to us about her dog. How long ought we to stay? Can Mr. Hardy walk much, etc., I asked, making conversation, as I knew one would have to. She has the large sad lacklustre eyes of a childless woman; great docility and readiness, as if she had learnt her part; not great alacrity, but resignation, in welcoming more visitors; wears a sprigged voile dress, black shoes and a necklace. We can't go far now, she said, though we do walk every day, because our dog isn't able to walk far. He bites, she told us. She became more natural and animated about the dog, who is evidently the real centre of her thoughts—then the maid came in. Then again the door opened, more sprucely, and in trotted a little puffy-cheeked cheerful old man, with an atmosphere cheerful and business-like in addressing us, rather like an old doctor's or solicitor's, saying "Well now——" or words like that as he shook hands. He was dressed in rough grey with a striped tie. His nose has a joint in it and the end curves down. A round whitish face, the eyes now faded and rather watery, but the whole aspect cheerful and vigorous. He sat on a three-cornered chair (I am too jaded with all this coming and going to do more than gather facts) at a round table, where there were the cake stands and so on; a chocolate roll; what is called a good tea; but he only drank one cup, sitting on his three-cornered chair. He was extremely affable and aware of his duties. He did not let the talk stop or disdain making talk. He talked of father: said he had seen me, or it might have been my sister, but he thought it was me, in my cradle. He had been to Hyde Park Place—oh, Gate was it. A very quiet street. That was why my father liked it. Odd to think that in all these years he had never been down there again. He went there often. Your father took my novel—*Far from the Madding Crowd*. We stood shoulder to shoulder against the British public about certain matters dealt with in that novel. You may have heard. Then he said how some other novel had fallen through that was to appear—the parcel had been lost coming from France—not a very likely thing to happen, as your father said—a big parcel of manuscript; and he asked me to send my story. I think he broke all the *Cornhill* laws—not to see the whole book; so I sent it in chapter by chapter and was never late. Wonderful what youth is! I had it in my head doubtless, but I never thought twice about it. It came out every month. They were nervous, because of Miss Thackeray I think. She said she became paralysed and could not write a word directly she heard the press begin. I daresay it was bad for a novel to appear like that. One begins to think what is good for the magazine, not what is good for the novel.

"You think what makes a strong curtain," put in Mrs. Hardy jocularly. She was leaning upon the tea table, not eating—gazing out.

Then we talked about manuscripts. Mrs. Smith had found the MS. of *F. from the M.C.* in a drawer during the war and sold it for the Red Cross. Now he has his MSS. back and the printer rubs out all the marks. But he wishes they would leave them as they prove it genuine.

He puts his head down like some old pouter pigeon. He has a very long head; and quizzical bright eyes, for in talk they grow bright. He said when he was in the Strand 6 years ago he scarcely knew where he was and he used

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to know it all intimately. He told us that he used to buy second-hand books—nothing valuable—in Wyck Street. Then he wondered why Great James Street should be so narrow and Bedford Row so broad. He had often wondered about that. At this rate, London would soon be unrecognisable. But I shall never go there again. Mrs. Hardy tried to persuade him that it was an easy drive—only 6 hours or so. I asked if she liked it, and she said Granville Barker had told her that when she was in the nursing home she had "the time of her life." She knew everyone in Dorchester but she thought there were more interesting people in London. Had I often been to Siegfried's* flat? I said no. Then she asked about him and Morgan,† said he was elusive, as if they enjoyed visits from him. I said I heard from Wells that Mr. Hardy had been up to London to see an air raid. "What things they say!" he said. "It was my wife. There was an air raid one night when we stayed with Barrie. We just heard a little pop in the distance. The searchlights were beautiful. I thought if a bomb now were to fall on this flat how many writers would be lost." And he smiled, in his queer way, which is fresh and yet sarcastic a little; anyhow shrewd. Indeed, there was no trace to my thinking of the simple peasant. He seemed perfectly aware of everything; in no doubt or hesitation; having made up his mind; and being delivered of all his work, so that he was in no doubt about that either. He was not interested much in his novels, or in anybody's novels: took it all easily and naturally. "I never took long with them," he said. "The longest was *The Dinnasts* (so pronounced)." "But that was really three books," said Mrs. Hardy. "Yes; and that took me six years; but not working all the time." "Can you write poetry regularly?" I asked (being beset with the desire to hear him say something about his books; but the dog kept cropping up. How he bit; how the inspector came out; how he was ill; and they could do nothing for him). "Would you mind if I let him in?" asked Mrs. Hardy, and in came Wessex, a very tousled, rough brown and white mongrel; got to guard the house, so naturally he bites people, said Mrs. H. "Well, I don't know about that," said Hardy, perfectly natural, and not setting much stock by his poems either it seemed. "Did you write poems at the same time as your novels?" I asked. "No," he said. "I wrote a great many poems. I used to send them about, but they were always returned," he chuckled. "And in those days I believed in editors. Many were lost—all the fair copies were lost. But I found the notes and I wrote them from those. I was always finding them. I found one the other day; but I don't think I shall find any more.

"Siegfried took rooms near here and said he was going to work very hard, but he left soon.

"E. M. Forster takes a long time to produce anything—7 years," he chuckled. All this made a great impression of the ease with which he did things. "I daresay *Far from the Madding Crowd* would have been a great deal better if I had written it differently," he said. But as if it could not be helped and did not matter.

HE USED to go to the Lushingtons in Kensington Square and saw my mother there. "She used to come in and out when I was talking to your father."

I wanted him to say one word about his writing before we left and could only ask which of his books he would have chosen if, like me, he had had to choose one to read in the train. I had taken the *Mayor of Casterbridge*. "That's being dramatised," put in Mrs. Hardy, and then brought *Life's Little Ironies*.

"And did it hold your interest?" he asked. I stammered that I could not stop reading it, which was true, but sounded wrong. Anyhow, he was not going to be drawn and went off about giving a young lady a wedding present. "None of my books are fitted to be wedding presents," he said. "You must give Mrs. Woolf one of your books," said Mrs. Hardy, inevitably. "Yes, I will. But I'm afraid only in the little thin paper edition," he said. I protested that it would be enough if he wrote his name (then was vaguely uncomfortable).

Then there was de la Mare. His last book of stories seemed to them such a pity. Hardy had liked some of his poems very much. People

* Siegfried Sassoon.

† E. M. Forster.

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said he must be a sinister man to write such stories. But he is a very nice man—a very nice man indeed. He said to a friend who begged him not to give up poetry, "I'm afraid poetry is giving up me." The truth is he is a very kind man and sees anyone who wants to see him. He has 16 people for the day sometimes. "Do you think one can't write poetry if one sees people?" I asked. "One might be able to—I don't see why not. It's a question of physical strength," said Hardy. But clearly he preferred solitude himself. Always however he said something sensible and sincere, and thus made the obvious business of compliment-giving rather unpleasant. He seemed to be free of it all; very active minded; liking to describe people; not to talk in an abstract way; for example Col. Lawrence, bicycling with a broken arm "held like that" from Lincoln to Hardy, listened at the door to hear if there was anyone there. "I hope he won't commit suicide," said Mrs. Hardy pensively, still leaning over the tea cups, gazing despondently. "He often says things like it, though he has never said quite that perhaps. But he has blue lines round his eyes. He calls himself Shaw in the army. No one is to know where he is. But it got into the papers." "He promised me not to go into the air," said Hardy. "My husband doesn't like anything to do with the air," said Mrs. Hardy.

Now we began to look at the grandfather clock in the corner. We said we must go—tried to confess we were only down for the day. I forgot to say that he offered L. whisky and water, which struck me that he was competent as a host and in every way. So we got up and signed Mrs. Hardy's visitors' books; and Hardy took my *Life's Little Ironies* off and trotted back with it signed; and Woolf spelt Wolff, which I daresay had given him some anxiety. Then Wessex came in again. I asked if Hardy could stroke him. So he bent down and stroked him, like the master of the house. Wessex went on wheezing away.

THERE was not a trace anywhere of deference to editors, or respect for rank or extreme simplicity. What impressed me was his freedom, ease and vitality. He seemed very "Great Victorian" doing the whole thing with a sweep of his hand (they are ordinary smallish curled up hands) and setting no great stock by literature; but immensely interested in facts; incidents; and somehow, one could imagine, naturally swept off into imagining and creating without a thought of its being difficult or remarkable; becoming obsessed; and living in imagination. Mrs. Hardy thrust his old grey hat into his hand and he trotted us out on to the road. "Where is that?" I asked him, pointing to a clump of trees on the down opposite, for his house is outside the town, with open country (rolling, massive downs, crowned with little tree coronets before and behind) and he said, with interest, "That is Weymouth. We see the lights at night—not the lights themselves, but the reflection of them." And so we left and he trotted in again.

Also I asked him if I might see the picture of Tess which Morgan had described, an old picture: whereupon he led me to an awful engraving of Tess coming into a room from a picture by Herkomer. "That was rather my idea of her," he said. But I said I had been told he had an old picture. "That's fiction," he said. "I used to see people now and then with a look of her."

Also Mrs. Hardy said to me, "Do you know Aldous Huxley?" I said I did. They had been reading his book, which she thought "very clever." But Hardy could not remember it: said his wife had to read to him—his eyes were now so bad. "They've changed everything now," he said. "We used to think there was a beginning and a middle and an end. We believed in the Aristotelian theory. Now one of those stories came to an end with a woman going out of the room." He chuckled. But he no longer reads novels. The whole thing—literature, novels, etc., all seemed to him an amusement, far away too, scarcely to be taken seriously. Yet he had sympathy and pity for those still engaged in it. But what his secret interests and activities are—to what occupation he trotted off when we left him—I do not know. Small boys write to him from New Zealand and have to be answered. They bring out a "Hardy number" of a Japanese paper, which he produced. Talked too about Blunden.

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I think Mrs. Hardy keeps him posted in the doings of the younger poets.

Rodmell 1926

As I am not going to milk my brains for a week, I shall here write the first pages of the greatest book in the world. This is what the book would be that was made entirely solely and with integrity of one's thoughts. Suppose one could catch them before they became "works of art"? Catch them hot and sudden as they rise in the mind—walking up Asheham hill for instance. Of course one cannot; for the process of language is slow and deluding. One must stop to find a word. Then, there is the form of the sentence, soliciting one to fill it.

ART AND THOUGHT

What I thought was this: if art is based on thought, what is the transmuting process? I was telling myself the story of our visit to the Hardys, and I began to compose it; that is to say to dwell on Mrs. Hardy leaning on the table, looking out, apathetically, vaguely, and so would soon bring everything into harmony with that as the dominant theme. But the actual event was different.

NEXT—WRITING BY LIVING PEOPLE

I scarcely ever read it. But, owing to his giving me the books, am now reading *C.* by M. Baring. I am surprised to find it as good as it is. But how good is it? Easy to say it is not a great book. But what qualities does it lack? That it adds nothing to one's vision of life, perhaps. Yet it is hard to find a serious flaw. My wonder is that entirely second-rate work like this, poured out in profusion by at least 20 people yearly, I suppose, has so much merit. Never reading it, I get into the way of thinking it non-existent. So it is, speaking with the utmost strictness. That is, it will not exist in 2026; but it has some existence now, which puzzles me a little. Now *Clarissa* bores me; yet I feel this important. And why?

MY OWN BRAIN

Here is a whole nervous breakdown in miniature. We came on Tuesday. Sank into a chair, could scarcely rise; everything insipid; tasteless, colourless. Enormous desire for rest. Wednesday—only wish to be alone in the open air. Air delicious—avoided speech; could not read. Thought of my own power of writing with veneration, as of something incredible, belonging to someone else; never again to be enjoyed by me. Mind a blank. Slept in my chair. Thursday. No pleasure in life whatsoever; but felt perhaps more attuned to existence. Character and idiosyncrasy as Virginia Woolf completely sunk out. Humble and modest. Difficulty in thinking what to say. Read automatically, like a cow chewing cud. Slept in chair. Friday: sense of physical tiredness; but slight activity of the brain. Beginning to take notice. Making one or two plans. No power of phrase-making. Difficulty in writing to Lady Colefax. Saturday (today) much clearer and lighter. Thought I could write, but resisted, or found it impossible. A desire to read poetry set in on Friday. This brings back a sense of my own individuality. Read some Dante and Bridges, without troubling to understand, but got pleasure from them. Now I begin to wish to write notes, but not yet novel. But today senses quickening. No "making up" power yet: no desire to cast scenes in my book. Curiosity about literature returning; want to read Dante, Havelock Ellis, and Berlioz autobiography; also to make a looking glass with a shell frame. These processes have sometimes been spread over several weeks.

PROPORTIONS CHANGED

That in the evening, or on colourless days, the proportions of the landscape change suddenly. I saw people playing stoolball in the meadow; they appeared sunk far down on a flat board; and the downs raised high up and mountainous round them. Detail was smoothed out. This was an extremely beautiful effect: the colours of the women's dresses also showing very bright and pure in the almost untinted surroundings. I knew, also, that the proportions were abnormal—as if I were looking between my legs.

SECOND-RATE ART

i.e. *C.*, by Maurice Baring. Within its limits, it is not second rate, or there is nothing

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markedly so, at first go off. The limits are the proof of its non-existence. He can only do one thing; himself to wit; charming, clean, modest, sensitive Englishman. Outside that radius and it does not carry far nor illumine much, all is—as it should be—light, sure, proportioned, affecting even; told in so well bred a manner that nothing is exaggerated, all related, proportioned. I could read this for ever, I said. L. said one would soon be sick to death of it.

WANDERVÖGELN
of the sparrow tribe. Two resolute, sunburnt, dusty girls in jerseys and short skirts, with packs on their backs, city clerks, or secretaries, tramping along the road in the hot sunshine at Ripe. My instinct at once throws up a screen, which condemns them: I think them in every way angular, awkward and self-assertive. But all this is a great mistake. These screens shut me out. Have no screens, for screens are made out of our own integument; and get at the thing itself, which has nothing whatever in common with a screen. The screen-making habit, though, is so universal that probably it preserves our sanity. If we had not this device for shutting people off from our sympathies we might perhaps dissolve utterly; separateness would be impossible. But the screens are in the excess; not the sympathy.

RETURNING HEALTH
This is shown by the power to make images; the suggestive power of every sight and word is enormously increased. Shakespeare must have had this to an extent which makes my normal state the state of a person blind, deaf, dumb, stone-stockish, and fish-blooded. And I have it compared with poor Mrs. Bartholomew almost to the extent that Shakespeare has it compared with me.

BANK HOLIDAY
Very fat woman, girl and man spend Bank Holiday—a day of complete sun and satisfaction—looking up family graves in the churchyard, 23 youngish men and women spend it tramping along with ugly black boxes on shoulders and arms, taking photographs. Man says to woman, "Some of these quiet villages don't seem to know it's Bank Holiday at all" in a tone of superiority and slight contempt.

THE MARRIED RELATION
Arnold Bennett says that the horror of marriage lies in its "dailiness." All acuteness of relationship is rubbed away by this. The truth is more like this: life—say 4 days out of 7—becomes automatic; but on the 5th day a bead of sensation (between husband and wife) forms which is all the fuller and more sensitive because of the automatic customary unconscious days on either side. That is to say the year is marked by moments of great intensity. Hardy's "moments of vision." How can a relationship endure for any length of time except under these conditions?

Tuesday, January 17th, 1928

YESTERDAY we went to Hardy's funeral. What did I think of? Of Max Beerbohm's letter, just read; or a lecture to the Newnhamites about women's writing. At intervals some emotion broke in. But I doubt the capacity of the human animal for being dignified in ceremony. One catches a bishop's frown and twitch; sees his polished, shiny nose; suspects the rapt spectacled young priest, gazing at the cross he carries, of being a humbug; catches Robert Lynd's distracted haggard eye; next here is the coffin, an overgrown one; like a stage coffin, covered with a white satin cloth; bearers elderly gentlemen rather red and stiff, holding to the corners; pigeons flying outside, insufficient artificial light; procession to poets corner; dramatic "In sure and certain hope of immortality" perhaps melodramatic. After dinner at Clive's Lytton protested that the great man's novels are the poorest of poor stuff; and can't read them. Lytton sitting or lying inert, with his eyes shut or exasperated with them open. Lady Strachey slowly fading, but it may take years. Over all this broods for me some uneasy sense of change and mortality and how partings are deaths; and then a sense of my own fame—why should this come over me? and then of its remoteness; and then the pressure of writing two articles on Meredith and furbishing up the Hardy. And Leonard sitting at home

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reading. And Max's letter; and a sense of the futility of it all.

Tuesday, December 2nd, 1930

NO, I cannot write that very difficult passage in *The Waves* this morning (how their lives hang lit up against the Palace) all because of Arnold Bennett and Ethel's* party. I can hardly get one word after another. There I was for 2 hours so it seemed, alone with B. in Ethel's little back room. And this meeting I am convinced was engineered by B. to "get on good terms with Mrs. Woolf"—when Heaven knows I don't care a rap if I'm on terms with B. or not. B. I say, because he can't say B. He ceases; shuts his eyes; leans back; one waits. "Begin," he at last articulates quietly, without any fluster. But the method lengthens out intolerably a rather uninspired discourse. It's fun. I like the old creature. I do my best, as a writer, to detect signs of genius in his smoky brown eye: I see certain sensuality, power, I suppose; but O as he cackled out "What a blundering fool I am—what a baby—compared with Desmond MacCarthy—how clumsy—how could I attack professors?" This innocence is engaging; but would be more so if I felt him, as he infers, a "creative artist." He said that George Moore in *The Mummer's Wife* had shown him *The Five Towns*: taught him what to see there: has a profound admiration for G. M.; but despises him for boasting of his sexual triumphs. "He told me that a young girl had come to see him. And he asked her, as she sat on the sofa, to undress. And he said she took off all her clothes and let him look at her. . . . Now that I don't believe. . . . But he is a prodigious writer—he lives for words. Now he's ill. Now he's an awful bore—he tells the same stories over and over. And soon people will say of me 'He's dead.'" I rashly said: "Of your books?" "No, of me," he replied, attaching, I suppose, a longer life than I do to his books.

Soon after this A. B. went to France, drank a glass of water and died of typhoid. (March 30th. His funeral today.)

"It's the only life," he said (this incessant scribbling, one word after another, one thousand words daily). "I don't want anything else. I think of nothing but writing. Some people are bored." "You have all the clothes you want, I suppose," I said. "And bath. And beds. And a yacht." "Oh yes, my clothes couldn't be better cut."

And at last I drew Lord David* in. And we taunted the old creature with thinking us refined. He said the gates of Hatfield were shut—"shut away from life." "But open on Thursdays," said Lord D. "I don't want to go on Thursdays," said B. "And you drop your aitches on purpose," I said, "thinking that you possess more 'life' than we do." "I sometimes tease," said B., "but I don't think I possess more life than you do. Now I must go home. I have to write one thousand words tomorrow morning." And this left only the scrag end of the evening; and this left me in a state where I can hardly drive my pen across the page.

Saturday, March 28th, 1931

ARNOLD Bennett died last night; which leaves me sadder than I should have supposed. A lovable genuine man; impeded, somehow a little awkward in life; well meaning; ponderous; kindly; coarse; knowing he was coarse; dimly floundering and feeling for something else; glutted with success; wounded in his feelings; avid; thicklipped; prosaic intolerably; rather dignified; set upon writing; yet always taken in; deluded by splendour and success; but naïve; an old bore; an egotist; much at the mercy of life for all his competence; a shopkeeper's view of literature; yet with the rudiments, covered over with fat and prosperity and the desire for hideous Empire furniture, of sensibility. Some real understanding power, as well as a gigantic absorbing power. These are the sort of things that I think by fits and starts this morning, as I sit journalising; I remember his determination to write 1,000 words daily; and how he trotted off to do it that night, and feel some sorrow that now he will never sit down and begin methodically covering his regulation number of pages in his workmanlike beautiful but dull hand. Queer how one regrets the dispersal of anybody who

* Ethel Sands.

* David Cecil.

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seemed—as I say—genuine: who had direct contact with life—for he abused me; and I yet rather wished him to go on abusing me; and me abusing him. An element in life—even in mine that was so remote—taken away. This is what one minds.*

Friday, April 28th, 1933

A MERE note. We got out of the car last night and began walking down to the Serpentine. A summer evening. Chestnuts in their crinolines, bearing tapers; grey green water and so on. Suddenly L. bore off; and there was Shaw, dwindled shanks, white beard; striding along. We talked by a railing for 15 minutes. He stood with his arms folded, very upright, leaning back: teeth gold tipped. Just come from the dentist and "lured" out for a walk by the weather. Very friendly. That is his art, to make one think he likes one. A great spurt of ideas. "You forget that an aeroplane is like a car—it bumps— We went over the great wall—saw a little dim object in the distance. Of course the tropics are the place. The people are the original human beings. We are smudged copies. I caught the Chinese looking at us with horror—that we should be human beings! Of course the tour cost thousands: yet to see us you'd think we hadn't the price of the fare to Hampton Court. Lots of old spinsters had saved up for years to come. Oh but my publicity! It's terrifying. An hour's bombardment at every port. I made the mistake of accepting * invitation. I found myself on a platform with the whole university round me. They began shouting We want Bernard Shaw. So I told them that every man at 21 must be a revolutionary. After that of course the police imprisoned them by dozens. I want to write an article for the *Herald* pointing out what Dickens said years ago about the folly of Parliament. Oh I could only stand the voyage by writing. I've written 3 or 4 books. I like to give the public full weight. Books should be sold by the pound. What a nice little dog. But aren't I keeping you and making you cold?" (touching my arm). Two men stopped along the path to look. Off he strode again on his dwindled legs. I said Shaw likes us. L. thinks he likes nobody. What will they say of Shaw in 50 years? He is 76 he said: too old for the tropics.

* There is an entry in Arnold Bennett's diary for 1930 in which he records that he went to a dinner party at which V. W. was another guest, and adds, "Virginia is all right: other guests held their breath to listen to us."

* Blank in manuscript.

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Leslie A. Fiedler

A Postscript to the Rosenberg Case

SINCE the execution of the Rosenbergs, it has become possible to see clearly what was for a long time obscured: that there were two Rosenberg cases, quite distinct from one another, though referred to by a single name; and that this ambiguity made it difficult for the pro- and anti-Rosenberg forces ever to engage in a real dialogue. How often in these past months we have been talking about quite different things under the same rubric!

The first Rosenberg case, which reached its climax with their trial in March, 1951, involved certain questions of fact about the transmission of secrets to the Soviet Union, especially the handing over of sketches for the detonating device of the atom bomb. Implicated in this first case, along with the Rosenbergs, were: the brother of Ethel Rosenberg, David Greenglass, who made a full confession; Morton Sobell, a physicist, who received a thirty years' sentence; Anatoli Yacovlev, the Russian vice-consul, who had got safely out of the United States in December of 1946; and the notorious Communist "drop," Harry Gold. Through Gold, who like Greenglass admitted all, the Rosenberg case was linked with those of the confessed espionage agents, Klaus Fuchs and Allan Nunn May, woven inextricably into a context against which their guilt appeared clear. The denials of the Rosenbergs seemed merely the mendacious pleas of two people fighting for their lives in the face of overwhelming evidence.

In this initial open-and-shut case, scarcely anyone was very interested. In the United States, it did not stir up nearly so much discussion as did even the relatively trivial business of Judith Coplon, to say nothing of the Hiss–Chambers affair. In Europe, it was ignored or meagrely reported, so that the European defenders of the Rosenbergs tended to be happily ignorant of the first, or factual, case; and this ignorance in many instances they fought desperately to preserve. The Communists themselves maintained a strange official silence about the Rosenbergs for more than a year after their arraignment. They were wary, presumably, about identifying themselves with a pair at once so central to their whole espionage effort and so flagrantly guilty; and they were baffled, no doubt, by the problem of defending two "comrades" who had been underground for six years, and who refused to avow their party membership in court.

The second, or legendary, Rosenberg case was invented, along with the Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case, at the end of October, 1951, in Knickerbocker Village, a housing settlement in New York City. The place of the double birth seems almost too apt; the Rosenbergs themselves had once inhabited that melancholy block of identical dwelling units that almost seem a visible manifestation of the pro-Communist petty-bourgeois mind: rigid, conventional in its own way, hopelessly self-righteous—the mind that dreamed the odd parody of martyrdom which was the role of the Rosenbergs in their second case.

The Rosenbergs stood alone in the new version of their plight—alone except for certain honourable ghosts. Gone were the real accomplices: Yacovlev and Sobell, Harry Gold, Klaus Fuchs, and Allan Nunn May, though "Davy" Greenglass, recruited to the Communist movement at the age of twelve by his nineteen-year-old sister, remained to play the shadowy villain. They were replaced by the evoked figures of Sacco and Vanzetti, Tom Mooney, the Scottsboro Boys, and, especially, Dreyfus. The cue had been given by the "progressive" (i.e.

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fellow-travelling) *National Guardian,* which had opened the defence campaign with a story headlined "Is the Rosenberg Case the Dreyfus Case of America's Cold War?" The revised Rosenbergs were no longer spies, but "political prisoners" in the European sense of the term, the victims of the class struggle and the cold war, defenders of the peace, representatives of a persecuted minority—these very people, it must be remembered, who would not admit their political allegiance in court, and who for six years had been under instructions not even to appear "progressive."

The long-drawn-out process of appeal in the American courts made it possible to set up the symbolic Rosenbergs in place of the real ones; between the first exposure of two spies and the appeal of the "framed-up victims before the bar of world opinion" came the year (soon two, and three) of the Rosenbergs' separation and imprisonment, and, surely, most genuine suffering. The Communists banked on this stretch of time to screen their sleight-of-hand; and it worked. Even those who had followed the first trial carefully found it difficult to keep it in mind; and the second, the legendary, Rosenberg case possessed the imagination of the world.

It is that second case which I wish to discuss, from the viewpoint of one American who has spent the last two years in Europe. There is no point in rehearsing the first; as far as I am concerned, the legal guilt of the Rosenbergs was clearly established at their trial, and in this belief I am joined by almost all Americans, whether conservative, liberal, or socialist. What I want to examine (and this, after all, is the heart of the matter) is why the Rosenbergs, for all their palpable guilt, won their second case before the world; why there arose such a universal condemnation of their death sentence; and why so many, in the teeth of the evidence, even believed in their innocence.

One can say in a general way that in the second case the Rosenbergs were not tried at all; but that, by a bit of prestidigitation, they too disappeared along with Gold, Yacovlev, and the rest; and that we were called upon to judge in their places Sacco and Vanzetti or Dreyfus. Through the evocation of these almost traditional victims, a kind of moral blackmail was practised on the liberal-minded, the flags of the gallant old causes were unfurled. What a relief to be able to wave them after the ghastly incidents of Fuchs and Nunn May and Hiss! The fact that the Rosenbergs were remarkable chiefly for their difference from the older martyrs, that the whole point of their case lay in this difference, was hardly remarked; there were too many who did not want to see them as they were, but merely to use them for self-exculpation—for joining together once more the "forward-looking" ranks that had marched unbroken for Vanzetti, but had since fallen hopelessly apart.

And yet the question remains: why this occasion rather than another; why this improbable pair; and why (outside of the United States itself) so nearly unanimous a response to their plight? To disentangle the motives that found a focus in the pro-Rosenberg movement is to write a thumbnail moral history of our time.

One must begin, I suppose, by separating out the absolute cynics, the Communist bureaucrats who used the case coldly when it was convenient to use it, as they had ignored it calmly when it was convenient to ignore it; and who knew that they could not lose in any event. For if the freeing of the Rosenbergs would have been for them a victory, their execution was equally one. Indeed, after a certain point, the energies of such functionaries were patently directed at insuring that clemency would not be granted. I do not want to seem to make machiavellian master-minds out of shabby Communist bureaucrats, but surely it was cunning rather than mere stupidity which led them to do everything that would infuriate American opinion, that would make any revision of the death sentence seem an admission of a judicial error—or worse.

It is no accident, I think, that the only plea which came near saving the Rosenbergs, the plea that brought the Supreme Court into urgent last-minute session, was prompted by one Irwin Edelman, an outsider who had been expelled from both the Communist Party and

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the Communist-oriented Defence Committee. The suffering and death of the Rosenbergs were willed by the makers of Communist opinion and relished by them, as every instance of discrimination against a Negro in America is willed and relished, as further evidence that they are right. These are the professional accomplices of calamity; and if, in the course of time, they suddenly cried "innocent," it was because they estimated that a greater possibility of disaster lay in such an assertion.

These conscious exploiters of the case were a tiny minority, yet one which had ready to hand a larger mass of naïve communicants already trained to believe, sincerely and even fervently, what that minority decided they should believe. In this sense, one can think of the bacterial warfare campaign and the various "peace" petitions as preparations for the Rosenberg case, as the Rosenberg case in turn is no end in itself, but a rehearsal for the next real or manufactured issue on the Communist agenda. This pre-fabricated public is made up not only of the more naïve party members, activists to whom ideas are unknown and mute attenders of meetings, but also of fellow-travellers who read nothing but the pro-Communist press (knowing, of course, that all other sources of information are "bought"). For such believers, an event does not even exist, much less have a significance, until it is recognised by their journals; and so for them there had simply been no Rosenberg case, until the party had given the go-ahead signal after months of discreet silence. For them, only the legendary case was real.

The Communists have long controlled in Continental Europe fair-sized numbers of "advanced" workers, peasants, and petty-bourgeoisie by manipulating a mythology inherited from a hundred years of political struggle: the belief that the state and its courts are always wrong; that the bourgeoisie is always wrong; and especially that the United States, the bastion of capitalism, is always wrong—with the corollary that no "progressive" (i.e. Communist or sympathiser) can ever be anything but innocent. (Only the notion that priests are always wrong could not be exploited in the Rosenberg case; otherwise it was a perfect ritual expression of the sub-Marxist catechism.) This group was joined by an even larger periphery, susceptible to the extent of not believing its own press, and of accepting in critical instances the opinions screamed in the *piazzas* by those whom they consider more "devoted" and "unselfish" than themselves, because they are louder and more assured. Together these formed, in such countries as France and Italy, a sizeable public which appears really to have believed that the Rosenbergs were innocent in the literal sense of the word, guiltless of the crime with which they were charged. This they knew, not from scrutinising the record, but from consulting the opinions of those who had always defined for them the truth. They would have believed it quite as firmly if there were no such people as the Rosenbergs—as, in a sense, there were not.*

Such a rank and file, influenced by Communist ideology at a second and third remove, did not exist in the United States, which possesses in its place a mass of people politically innocent and merely indifferent to such affairs in a way no European can understand. To this American group, the second Rosenberg case had no existence; so that between them and their European opposite numbers there was not even ground for real disagreement.

In both Europe and America, however, a substantial minority, made up mainly of intellectuals, shared a third position which asserted the innocence of the Rosenbergs, or at least maintained the final irrelevance of their guilt. This position, growing out of the wish that the Rosenbergs might actually be inno-

* There were a few individuals who actually read the trial proceedings and who believed nevertheless that the Rosenbergs were innocent. These, however, had to resort to the assumption that the F.B.I., in collaboration with Greenglass, had for some weird reason manufactured the evidence in order to frame the Rosenbergs. Obviously, on such a supposition every convicted criminal can be shown to be innocent. That these individuals—many of them strongly anti-Communist—could easily assent to the implied judgement upon American courts and the American press as fantastically corrupt, shows that they were not so immune to Communist propaganda as they would like to think.

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cent, culminated in the conviction that they were symbolically guiltless, whatever action they may have committed. For even if the Rosenbergs did perform the act, this line of argument goes, treason was not what they had meant; they had been acting for a better world, for Humanity (i.e. for the Soviet Union, whose interests all the more enlightened had once known were identical with those of mankind); and anyhow, Russia had been our ally when the Rosenbergs gave them a helping hand; and after all, Russia has not yet used the Bomb, will never use it (to stop believing this would mean having to re-think their whole lives!), so that sharing the atomic secret in this somewhat unorthodox fashion was really a blow for world peace, etc., etc. In the light of all this, isn't it better simply to declare that the Rosenbergs are "innocent," as a kind of shorthand—the reverse of that shorthand by which the defendants in the Moscow trials were declared "guilty," even if they hadn't exactly done what they were accused of—for an analysis too complicated to explain to the uninitiated without re-educating them completely?

How near the conscious surface such reasoning was carried on must have varied from case to case; but in almost every instance it led to the by now customary double book-keeping of the Communists' friends, the exploitation of a vocabulary which makes it possible to say at one and the same time, "They didn't do it at all; it's a frame-up!" and, "After all, they had a right; their hearts were pure!" This is an absurd position in any event; but when held by the accused themselves (and it was held by the Rosenbergs, as I shall show), it becomes utterly monstrous.

FINALLY, one is left with those who cried only for mercy, for the conversion of the death sentence, "even if they were guilty as charged." It is difficult to disentangle the position itself from those who maintained it; to redeem it from the scandalous way it was used by the Communists who sought to confuse hopelessly the two kinds of protest, to make every cry for pardon seem an assertion of innocence, and more, a condemnation of the United States, the Atlantic Pact, the European Army, and God knows what else. Even where the Communists played only a secondary role, there was often evident in the shrillness of the cries of horror a desire to celebrate the fall of America from innocence, to indulge in an orgy of self-righteousness at American expense.

There is no political act (and the simplest cry for clemency was inevitably a political act) that is not marred these days by the obsessive envy and anguish of many Europeans in regard to America. If these Europeans could only have believed as firmly as they pretended that America had utterly yielded to hysteria and persecution, the balance of historic guilt, derived from past wars and present powerlessness, that tilts so annoyingly in their direction, would have been righted. And they might then have liked America more, not less! But they could only want to believe this, not really credit it; any more than they have been able really to accept the stories of germ warfare in Korea. In a Europe that tends to admire where it is horrified, and to be overwhelmed by the fascination of ruthlessness, even a semblance of mere inefficiency at terror is a reproach.

Yet allowing for all that was stage-managed or disingenuous in the pleas for clemency; discounting the rather professional nature of some of the ecclesiastical protests; setting aside the pleading based on a general condemnation of the death penalty, which does not bear precisely on this case; and discounting the almost mechanical reflex of those to whom, since Hitler, any threat to any Jew seems a recrudescence of the old horror, one comes to a residual protest that cannot be explained away, and in the face of which I feel, as an American, that the execution of the Rosenbergs represented a failure of the moral imagination.

THE final protest that existed behind all those based on stupidity or malice or official dogma was the humane one. Under their legendary role, there were, after all, the two real Rosenbergs, man and wife; unattractive and vindictive but human; fond of each other and of their two children; concerned with operations for tonsillitis and family wrangles; isolated from each other during three years of not-quite-hope and deferred despair; at the end,

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prepared scientifically for the electrocution, itself painfully documented by the morning papers in an America that can keep no secrets; ultimately, capable of dying. That they were individuals and would die, they themselves had denied in every gesture—and many foolishly believed them. In the face of their own death the Rosenbergs became, despite themselves and their official defenders, symbols of the conflict between the human and the political, justice and mercy; and this conflict only those who knew they were guilty could fully appreciate.

It was, in the end, not only a matter of protesting against a sentence that to practically all people outside the United States seemed excessive, but of realising that they counted, these two people moved always like puppets from above, that they counted as human, though they committed treason in disregard of all real human considerations. It is wonderful, in a way, that two individuals did still count to so many people in a world as accustomed as ours to routine mass slaughter. Nor is there any sense in becoming enraged at the fact that these two should have stirred up the response that could not be brought to focus on the countless victims of Soviet firing squads; that most of the world should have been crying out for the lives of two American spies, convicted by due process, at the very moment when Willi Goettling and a score of nameless others were being summarily shot in Soviet Berlin. America should rather be flattered that as a nation it continues to act on a plane where its actions are still inviting to moral judgement.

In the Rosenberg case, a part of the world (that part, at least, still not hopelessly poisoned by Communism) turned to America for a symbolic demonstration that somewhere a government existed willing to risk the loss of political face for the sake of establishing an unequivocal moral position. A minority at least understood that the Communists were doing everything in their power to make any concession seem a cowardly retreat; but they hoped that America would have the courage to appear in that sense cowardly. I cannot help feeling that even among the fellow-travellers there existed on some deeply buried level the shadowy desire for someone, somewhere, to assert that the political man was not all of man, that our humanity is neither fictional nor irrelevant.

This opportunity was let slip away, in part because of political innocence, in part through a lack of moral imagination, but also through a certain incapacity to really believe in Communists as people, an incapacity quite evident in the cold official declarations, and in the bland equanimity of public opinion in the face of an international uproar. There seemed to be a wish to believe that the enemy was sub-human. Needless to say, the Communists themselves need no lesson in this sort of manœuvre; their attitude was reflected in the words of the Rosenbergs' lawyer before the White House on the eve of their death: "I don't know what animals I am dealing with, but I know that I am dealing with animals. . . ." Yet we have no right to let ourselves be provoked into answering the Communists with equivalent strategies; in contrast to them, we still have much to lose; and in trying to dehumanise our opponents, we may end by dehumanising ourselves.

THIS failure placed in the hands of the Communists the advantage of being able to exploit the very human considerations that they were least capable of feeling. And there was an additional advantage in their cynicism itself, which left them able to use ruthlessly the Rosenberg children, the coincidence of the original electrocution date with the fourteenth wedding anniversary of Ethel and Julius, the shocking physical details of their death—all with a complete lack of squeamishness. On the hoardings all over the world, the final embraces of the Rosenbergs and their approach to the electric chair were turned into clichés, occasions for public orgies of political vindictiveness.

But all this, it must never be forgotten, not until the leaders of the party had decided it was safe to be sorry—safe for the party, of course, and not for the Rosenbergs. The disregard by the Communists of the individuals whose causes they support, their willingness to compromise their very lives for the sake of making propitious propaganda, has been known to

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everyone since the days of the Scottsboro Boys. Unlike those boys, or Tom Mooney or the other classic cases, the Rosenbergs were actual party comrades. This did not mean, however, that there was any more real desire to save them; indeed, as enlightened and disciplined members they would be expected to approve the tactics that assured their deaths in order to blacken the United States in the eyes of the world. Their actual affiliation was, in fact, an embarrassment, something not to be played upon, but concealed. The *Manchester Guardian* and other liberal journals might talk of "making martyrs for the Communists," but the Communists, victims of the frantic game of hide-and-seek that they had been playing with themselves ever since the dawning of the Popular Front, expended a good deal of energy to hide the fact that these martyrs were "theirs."

"Death for the Rosenbergs is a Victory for McCarthy!" the posters in Europe read, and who, in Europe at least, remembered that McCarthy had never had anything to do with the affair? Surely the chief evil of what is called McCarthyism consists in branding honest men as Communists out of malice and stupidity. But how does this concern calling a Communist a Communist, or deciding by legal process that a spy is a spy? These creatures of Soviet foreign policy were labelled the defenders of all "freedom-loving peoples," sacrifices to nothing less than their love for "American Democracy."

There were no limits to the absurd masquerades. A hundred marching Communists in London put flowers at the foot of a statue of Franklin Roosevelt with an attached card reading, "That Roosevelt's Ideas May Live the Rosenbergs Must Not Die!" Not Marx's or Lenin's ideas, please note, but Roosevelt's! It is all of a piece. Julius draped after his death, not with a red flag, but with the ritual prayer shawl; not the "Internationale" sung, but "Go Down Moses" and the Psalms; the American flags flying brazenly over the cortège and the rabbi to intone unbelieved-in prayers at the grave. But the hoax would not quite hold to the end, for the crowd at the funeral parlour booed when a rabbi, invited for the sake of camouflage, reminded them that the Jewish religion teaches the forgiveness of enemies: in an instant the fake piety and humanity disappeared from the carefully prepared faces, and those who had cried for mercy a little while before, hooted down the mention of its name.

But there was worse yet. I was in Rome when the news of the Rosenbergs' death came through, and I can speak only of what I actually witnessed; but there at least, on the faces of the Communist crowds surging and screaming before the American Embassy, I saw nothing but joy. They were glad, these young activists, that the Rosenbergs were safely dead; for a little while they had been afraid that some last-minute reprieve might cheat them of their victory celebration, that they would be unable to go through the streets in their Sunday best chalking up "Death to the Killers of the Rosenbergs!" and to sit afterwards over a bottle of wine, content with a good day's work. But even this is not the uttermost obscenity.

THAT the American public should have been, on this occasion, indifferent to the humanity of its enemies, is deplorable enough; that the Communists should deny the humanity of their comrades, much worse; but that two individuals should deny their own humanity in the face of death, is the ultimate horror, the final revelation of a universal moral calamity. For even at the end, the Rosenbergs were not able to think of themselves as real people, only as "cases," very like the others for which they had helped fight, the Scottsboro Boys and Harry Bridges and the Trenton Ten, replaceable puppets in a demonstration that never ends. There is something touching in their own accounts of reading each issue of the *National Guardian* (not the frank *Daily Worker*, but the fellow-travelling sheet) to share in the ritualistic exploitation of themselves. But even before the "progressive" journal had begun to spread their story, they themselves had written to each other the foreseeable platitudes of the propaganda on their behalf. From the start, they had not been able to find any selves realler than those official clichés. If there is a tragedy of the Rosenbergs, this is it.

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THE persistently evoked image of Sacco and Vanzetti had led many to expect in the correspondence of the Rosenbergs some evidence of an underlying honesty, some frank and simple declaration of faith; but they could not hit upon any note that rang true. Reading the "death-house letters" of the Rosenbergs, one has the sense that, not only the Marxist dream of social justice, but the very possibilities of any heroism and martyrdom are being blasphemed. It is a parody of martyrdom they give us, too absurd to be truly tragic, too grim to be the joke it is always threatening to become.

Ethel's last appeal to President Eisenhower was the first of their letters I read; and it is surely among the most embarrassing, in its deliberate and transparent craftiness. She, who had already been writing about Eisenhower in private as "our *gnaedige Gauleiter,*" refers in a painfully adulatory beginning to that embarrassment "which the ordinary person feels in the presence of the great and famous," and which has kept her from writing to the President before. Only the example of Mrs. Oatis, she explains, who "bared her heart to the head of a foreign state" has led her to look for "as much consideration from the head of her own." Ethel has been unable to avoid the note of reproach in this comparison of mercy on either side of the Iron Curtain; but to take off the curse, she hastens to protest her ignorance, in the typical gesture of the Communist who has felt obliged to praise, however mildly, something publicly identified with his real allegiance. "Of Czechoslovakia I know very little, of her President even less than that. . . ." This unconvincing avowal, however, does not satisfy even her, so she tries the alternative gambit of gratuitous flag-waving, announcing quite inconsequently that for America she "would be homesick anywhere in the world."

She then reminds Eisenhower that before he was a President, he had been a "Liberator," but it is not really a congenial memory to her, for she still has ringing in her ear her own cry of "*Gauleiter,*" and the conventional Communist characterisation of the American general staff as "heirs of the Nazis." The transition to this basic note is easy; her execution will be, she charges, "an act of vengeance," and not the first, she reminds Eisenhower, identifying herself and her husband with the 6,000,000 hounded Jews of Europe, and the President with the masters of Buchenwald—those "ghastly mass butchers, the obscene fascists" who are "graciously receiving the benefits of mercy," while "the great democratic United States is proposing the savage destruction of a small unoffending Jewish family. . . ." At last she is at home. The hatred, the obvious irony, the ready-made epithets of the Communist press are released like saliva at the ting of a bell. How happily she forgets that she has been defending the concept of mercy, and using the word "democratic" of her own country without sarcasm.

But then there is the final shift, the terminal series of elegantly unctuous appeals: in the name of "fealty to religious and democratic ideals," as "an offering to God," in the name of the President's wife who will "plead my cause with grace and felicity," or of "the province of the affectionate grandfather, the sensitive artist, the devoutly religious man." And the rhetoric reaches its high point with the reminder that "truly the stories of Christ, Moses and Ghandi hold more sheer wonderment and spiritual treasure than all the conquests of Napoleon." Against the shadow of these names the alternating venom and flattery seem especially evident; and we are left astonished at the self-righteousness that dared evoke them.

THE letters which the Rosenbergs wrote to each other from their cells in Sing Sing seem at first glance superior at least to this. Ethel, to be sure, is still hopelessly the victim not only of her politics but of the painfully pretentious style that is its literary equivalent; but Julius, more the scientist in his view of himself, manages from time to time to seem sincere and touching. One is moved by his feeling for his wife, which is more than love—an almost frantic dependence and adulation; and by the tears that stand in his eyes after the visits of his children. But even these scenes, we remember, were, if not staged, at least edited for publication; inserted into a context of the most banal thumbnail editorials ("I was horrified to read

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. . . that our government is planning an accord with Spain . . . to ally ourselves with the most reactionary, feudal and fascist elements in order to defend democracy. . . . Something is very rotten in Denmark. . . .")* at the wish of the Rosenbergs themselves.

In part, their self-exposure was aimed, as they declared, at raising money for their children; but in part, it must have been intended to make political capital out of their own misery and frustrated passion. The line between the person and the case, between private and public had been broken down for them long before, and could not be re-drawn even in the extremest of situations. A single logic connects the Communist hating on order the person he has never seen; the activist ignoring on the street yesterday's best friend who has become a "deviationist"; the wife leaving her husband the day after he is expelled from the party; the son informing on the father; the accused in Russia slavishly vilifying themselves in court —and the Rosenbergs exploiting their final intimacies to strike a blow in the cold war.

It is in light of this failure to distinguish the person from "the cause," the fact from its "dialectical" significance, that we must understand the lies (what are for us, at least, lies) of the letters. The most flagrant, of course, is the maintenance by the Rosenbergs of the pose of innocence to the very end, and to each other. We have grown used to Communist spies lying in court with all the conviction and fervour of true victims; there was the recent example of Alger Hiss, to name only one; but we had always hoped that to their wives at least, in darkness and whispers, they spoke the truth. Yet the Rosenbergs played out their tragi-comedy to the end; and this we should have foreknown. For the true believer believes above all in his own unimpeachable innocence. Precisely because the Rosenbergs could have committed espionage as they did, they could not ever confess it.

They were able to commit their kind of treason because they were incapable of telling treason from devotion, deceit from honesty. It was not even, though this would be easier to accept, that they chose deliberately between rival allegiances; the Soviet Union versus the United States. They did not know that such a choice existed, but believed in their own way what they continued to assert, that they had always loved and served "American Democracy," which they interpreted as being synonymous with Communism. It is misleading to think of them as liars, though their relationship to everything, including themselves, was false. When Julius, who had stuck up in his cell a copy of the Declaration of Independence clipped out of the *New York Times*, refers to it, as if in passing, so that all the world will know he is really a misunderstood patriot, one is tempted to call him a poseur and a hypocrite; but he is something much more devious.

ETHEL, typically, insists on defining their position more clearly. Thrilled by the sound of the ram's horn, she thinks of the Jews everywhere hastening to the synagogues to pray for a happy new year, but hastens to remind them *via* her husband that "we must not use prayer to the Almighty as an excuse for avoiding our responsibilities to our neighbours . . . the daily struggle for social justice." And she concludes, astonishingly, with the appeal: "Jews and non-Jews, Black and White, we must all stand together firm, solid and strong." It is like the curtain line of an "agit-prop" choral production.

Judaism happens to lie closest to hand because of the accident of the Rosenbergs' birth, but any other tradition would have done as well—and does! Not only Jesus, Gandhi, and Moses of Ethel's letter to the President, but Roosevelt and "Butch" LaGuardia in the Rosenbergs' letters to each other. The list might be extended indefinitely; for the Rosenbergs had been told, and were prepared to believe *a priori*, that they were the heirs of all the ages: Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson, Isaiah, Confucius,

* The reader checking the quotations which follow against the English text of the letters will find certain discrepancies, for I am translating them back from the French text, published in the *Figaro Littéraire*, the only one available to me. There is, however, a certain justice in this procedure; for the documents of the legendary Rosenberg case were intended primarily for Europe, and should be seen backward through Europe to be truly appreciated.

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Leonardo da Vinci, Ivan the Terrible, Charlie Chaplin, and Christopher Columbus had all contributed to their patrimony.

They even like to think of themselves as sharing in the peculiarly American *mana* of the Brooklyn Dodgers. "The victory of the Dodgers over the Phillies," Ethel writes, "quickly restored me to my customary good spirits," and one takes it for a relatively harmless example of the pursuit of the popular and folksy that led Ethel to sing folk-songs in the Death House. But she cannot leave it at that; the editorial follows the next day, between declarations of love: "It is the Dodgers' unconquerable spirit which makes people love them. But where they have especially covered themselves with glory is in making an important contribution to the rooting out of racial prejudice." (She is referring to the fact that the Dodgers were the first major league baseball team to have a Negro player.) We have moved from melodrama to comedy, but the point is always the same. What is involved is the system of moral double book-keeping invented to fool the examiners, but so successful that it has ended by bamboozling the book-keeper himself.

Nothing is what it seems: the Communist parties advocate revolution, and they do not; the Communist International has been dissolved, but it exists; one commits crimes, but one is innocent. Anyone can call war, peace; or lies, the truth; but to believe such assertions so that one will face death for them requires a highly trained will and imagination. For such belief, the Rosenbergs had been in training ever since they had combined wooing with the study of Communist literature; and they had finally reached a degree of perfection which enabled them to attain the final stage of subterfuge, to go "underground."

To me, even more extraordinary (for it seems on the face of it pointless) than the assertion of their innocence is the Rosenbergs' stubborn silence about their political affiliations. In court, they had refused to speak on constitutional grounds, pleading possible self-incrimination; in their letters to each other, these "martyrs of the Communist cause," never mention the word Communism, unless in quotation marks as an example of slander by their enemies; while the very name of the Soviet Union is, needless to say, avoided like a dirty word.

The expurgation goes sometimes to fantastic lengths, of which a characteristic example occurs in a letter of Ethel's written on June 21, 1951. "My beloved husband," she begins, "I feel so discouraged by this unjustifiable attack on a legally constituted American Party! The spectre of Fascism looms up, enormous and menacing. . . ." But she does not identify the party beyond labelling it American; and the explanatory note attached by the Defence Committee is equally coy. "Seventeen men and women had been arrested and convicted in New York under the recently passed Smith Act." If one already knows that those otherwise unqualified "men and women" were the leaders of the Communist Party, all well and good. If not, it is apparently better to persist in one's ignorance.

The upshot of the whole business is that the Rosenbergs were quite incapable of saying in their last letters just what it was they thought they were dying for. Not only had they excluded themselves from the traditional procedure of the old-style radical, who rises up in court to declare that he has acted in the teeth of accepted morality and law for the sake of certain higher principles; they could not even tell the world for what beliefs they were being "framed." Beyond the cry of "frame-up," they could only speak in hints and evasions; so that they finished seeming martyrs only to their own double-talk, to a handful of banalities: "democracy and human dignity," "liberty and peace," "the greatest good of our own children, our family and all families," and finally, "the interests of American Democracy, of justice and fraternity, of peace and bread and roses and the laughter of children."

To believe that two innocents had been falsely condemned for favouring "roses and the laughter of children," one would have to believe the judges and public officials of the United States not merely the Fascists the Rosenbergs called them, but monsters, insensate

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beasts; and perhaps this was partly the meaning they intended to convey. But one must look deeper, realise that a code is involved, a substitution of equivalents whose true meaning can be read off immediately by the insider. "Peace, democracy and liberty," like "roses and the laughter of children," are only conventional ciphers for the barely whispered word "Communism," and Communism itself only a secondary encoding of the completely unmentioned Soviet Union. The Soviet Union—here is the sole principle and criterion of all value—and to this principle the Rosenbergs felt that they had been true; in this sense, they genuinely believed themselves innocent, more innocent than if they had never committed espionage!

The final pity was they could not say even so much aloud—except in certain symbolic outcries of "frame-up" and "persecution," and only through the most palpable lies. It is for this reason that they failed in the end to become martyrs or heroes—or even human beings. What was there left to die?

Yet despite all this, *because* of it, they should have been granted mercy. The betrayal of their essential humanity by their comrades and themselves left the burden of its defence with their opponents. Before the eyes of the world an opportunity was lost to assert concretely what abstract declarations can never prove: that the suffering person is more real than the political moment that produces him or the political philosophy for which he stands. Surely, it is not even a paradox to assert that it is a special duty to treat as persons, as real humans, those who most blasphemously deny their own humanity?

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Tom Scott

A Ballad — after Villon

Ane Ballat o the Leddies o auld tyme.

TELL me whaur, in whit countrie,
Bydes Flora nou, yon Roman Belle?
Whaur Thaïs, Archipiades be,
Thon sibbit cuisins, can ye tell
Whaur gossipan Echo draws pell-mell
Abuin some burn owre-hung wi binc,
Her bewtie's mair nor human spell:
Ay, whaur are the snaws lang syne?

Whaur's Héloïse, yon wyce abbess
For wham Pete Abelard manless fell,
Yet lovan aye, at Sanct Denyss
Wroucht oot his days in cloistrit cell?
An say whaur yon queen is as well
That ordrit Buridan yae dine
Be sacket, an dumped in Seine t cool:
Ay, whaur are the snaws lang syne?

Queen Blanche, as pure's the flouer-de-lys,
Whase voice nae siren's culd excel,
Bertha Big-fuit, Alys, Betrice,
An her that held the Maine hersel?
Guid Joan o Lorraine, the lass they tell
The English brunt at Rouen hync——
Whaur are they Sovereign, I appeal:
Ay, whaur are the snaws lang syne?

Prince, this week I can noucht weill,
Nor this year, say whaur nou they shine.
Ask—ye'll but hear the owrecome swell:
Ay, whaur are the snaws lang syne?

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Dazai Osamu

Two Stories

DAZAI OSAMU, whose real name was Tsushima Shuji, was born in 1909, the youngest son of a wealthy landowner in northern Japan. He entered the French department of Tokyo Imperial University in 1931, but failed to graduate. Weak physically and unstable psychologically, he indulged in a flamboyant bohemianism that has made him a legend and the idol of a cult, a sort of Japanese Rimbaud. He was on occasion a drug-addict and an alcoholic, and he tried suicide at least three times before he succeeded in drowning himself in June, 1948, a month after the second of the two stories translated below was published.

His writings are largely autobiographical, falling in the personal, subjective tradition that has dominated 20th century Japanese fiction. Naturalism, introduced from France around 1900, took a strange turn in Japan: the Japanese writer, converted by Zola and convinced of the need to report on contemporary Japanese society, looked about him and found that Japanese society, changing rapidly and very possibly disintegrating, quite refused to reveal itself; hence he concluded that the only thing he could write about truthfully was himself, and the "I-novel" became the standard vehicle for Japanese "naturalism." Today the movement shows signs of bankruptcy, and Dazai's extraordinary post-war novel *No Longer Human* has perhaps brought it as far as it can go.

Dazai would have been unhappy and uncertain in the most conservative and stable Japanese environment. His psychological troubles, one would judge from his writings and especially from *No Longer Human*, had their origins in his position as the youngest child of a large family with a strong and dominant father—in the traditional Japanese family system. His final collapse, however, clearly resulted from his confrontation with Tokyo and its chaos of clashing cultural influences. The passages in *No Longer Human* in which he describes his early terror at the city are as effective as anything he wrote, and the brief sections of the same novel in which he tells of his longing and inability to go back to the provinces are symptomatic of a nostalgia very basic to the modern Japanese mind.—E. G. S.

OF WOMEN

I AM writing a tired story for young readers not because I want to be different or because I am unconcerned with young readers' tastes. I write it rather because I know it will please them. Young readers are tired and old themselves these days, and my story can bring them no discomfort and no surprises. It is a story for those who have lost hope.

In Tokyo on February 26 of this year, the young army officers revolted. On the same day I sat with a friend beside a charcoal brazier. We knew nothing of the revolt. We were talking of women—of women's nightgowns.

"I still don't see. Be concrete—like a realistic story. When you talk about women it has to be like a realistic story. Will she have on perhaps a long red silk one?"

Each of us was conjuring up a picture of the woman who would make it possible to go on living. He had finished his. She would be a mistress, a fragile mistress, twenty-eight years old. She would live in rented second-floor rooms up an alley just east of the river. She would have with her only her fatherless daughter, five years old. My friend would go to see her on the night of the midsummer river festival, and he would draw pictures for the child. A circle filled in with yellow crayon, "That's the full moon." The woman would have on a pale blue terry-cloth kimono, and her sash would be embroidered with wisteria.

And now, pushed on by his questions, I was describing mine.

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"It won't be crêpe. Crêpe always looks dirty. For people like us it has to be something smart."

"How about pyjamas?"

"Even worse. There's nothing less exciting than pyjamas. And with only the tops on she'd look like something out of the funny papers."

"So maybe you'll have a terry-cloth kimono too?"

"No, a man's kimono, a cotton one, just back from the laundry. With heavy stripes. A narrow belt from the same material. She ties it in front like a judo jacket. I know—a night kimono like the ones you get at a hotel. That's it. She makes you think a little of a boy."

"Well, now. You talk about how worn out you are, but you still have a lively eye. But then there's nothing livelier than a funeral, I suppose. How does she do her hair?"

"Any style but Japanese. Japanese style is oily and it gets in the way. And it comes in such ridiculous shapes."

"A nice, unaffected foreign hairdo, how would that be? I know—she's an actress. Like someone from the old Imperial Repertory."

"I don't like actresses. They worry about their damned reputations."

"Now you're being funny. This is a serious conversation."

"I'm not being funny. Love is a dangerous thing. You can't be too careful about it."

"But we aren't getting very far. We'll be realistic. We'll take her on a trip. When you get women on the move you find out all sorts of things about them."

"She doesn't move much. She's a sleepy sort of woman."

"Aren't you reticent, though? I see I must be firm. After all, we have to get her into that hotel kimono, don't we?"

"Well, let's try starting out from Tokyo Central."

"Fine, fine. You've promised to meet at Tokyo Central."

"Last night I said we ought to go on a trip, and she nodded. I said I'd be waiting at Tokyo Central, and she nodded again. That's all the promise there was."

"Wait. She's a novelist."

"No, she's not a novelist. I don't have a good name with lady novelists. She's a painter. A tired painter. There must be rich lady painters somewhere."

"Is that so much different from a novelist?"

"Hmmm. Maybe we'll have to settle for a geisha. Anyway, she's the kind of woman you can't surprise any more."

"Have you been with her before this trip?"

"It seems as though I have, and it seems as though I haven't. If I have, the memory of it is no more than a dream. I see her no more than three times a year."

"Where do you plan to go?"

"Not over two or three hours from Tokyo. A hot spring in the mountains somewhere."

"Don't get excited. She isn't even at the station yet."

"We made no more of a promise than that, and I know she won't come. Still she might, just possibly. I go to the station not really hoping. She is not there. I think of going on by myself. But I wait to the last five minutes."

"Your baggage?"

"One suitcase. It is getting late, five to two. Then I look around."

"And there she is, smiling."

"Not smiling. She has a serious expression. 'I've kept you waiting,' she says in a low voice."

"She reaches for your suitcase."

"But I refuse to let her have it. I say I'll carry it myself."

"You have the tickets. Second class?"

"First class or third class. Third class."

"You're on the train."

"I go with her to the diner. White tablecloth, flowers, landscape going by outside—it's not unpleasant. I drink beer absentmindedly."

"And you press her to have a glass."

"I do not. Something soft for her."

"It will be summer."

"Autumn."

"And you just sit there drinking beer absentmindedly."

"'Thank you for coming,' I say. It sounds terribly gentle. I am pleased, and I find myself getting a little sentimental."

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"Now you're at the hotel. It's evening?" "And the important part begins. From where we go to the baths."

"You go separately of course."

"She absolutely refuses to go with me. So I go first. When I get back she has changed to a hotel kimono."

"Let me take it from there—I see fairly well how it's coming out. You can tell me if I'm wrong. You go out on the veranda and sit in the rattan chair. You light a cigarette. A Camel. You work away at it. The autumn leaves are bright red in the evening sun. After a while she comes back. She spreads her towel on the veranda railing. Then she stands quietly behind you, looking in the direction you are looking, submissively. You have found the hillside before you beautiful, and she takes it in as you have seen it. This does not last long, five minutes at most."

"One minute is plenty. Five minutes and you would never come out of it."

"Dinner is brought in. There is saké with it. Do you drink?"

"Wait. 'I've kept you waiting,' she said at the station, and she hasn't said anything since. Wouldn't it be a good idea to give her another line?"

"I don't think so. It would ruin everything if she said the wrong thing."

"So she comes in from the veranda and sits down to dinner without a word? Isn't that a little awkward?"

"But you are talking to the maid. Nothing awkward about it."

"I'm not, though. Softly and clearly she says, 'I can take care of it, thank you,' and the maid goes out. It happens quickly."

"I begin to see her a little better."

"She pours saké for me. She does it badly, like a small boy. She looks unconcerned. She holds the saké in her left hand still, and she leans on her right hand and reads the newspaper spread out on the mat beside her."

" 'There's been a flood in Kyoto.' "

"No, something that tells more of the times. There's been a fire in the zoo. A hundred monkeys burned alive in their cages."

"Shocking. Let's just have her read tomorrow's horoscope."

"I finish the saké. 'Let's eat,' I say. We eat, only the two of us together. There is an omelette. I feel wretched. I stop eating as though I have remembered something. I turn to the desk. I take manuscript paper from my suitcase and begin writing feverishly."

"And why do you do that?"

"Because I am weak. I feel myself in a corner and I have to strike a pose. Something I was born with. Or more like something that was waiting for me from before I was born. Anyway, I am in a very bad mood."

"You're floundering, we might say."

"I have nothing to write. I write the alphabet over and over again. As I write, I tell her there's something I have to finish in a hurry, before I forget. Why doesn't she go out and look at the town? I feel sure she will find it a nice, quiet town."

"So now you begin to smash things up. Well, there's no help for it. She nods. She leaves the room after she has dressed."

"I roll over as though someone had pushed me. I look around the room."

"You read the horoscope in the evening paper. 'Beware of travel.'"

"I smoke a Camel. Three sen apiece. A luxurious feeling. I am rather pleased with myself."

"The maid comes in and asks how she should lay the mattresses."

"I jump up. Separate, I say jovially. I want a drink, but I control myself."

"It must be about time for the woman to come back."

"Not yet. I watch the maid leave, and I do something strange."

"You don't run away?"

"I count my money. Three ten-yen notes, two or three yen in change."

"I feel better. When the woman comes back you begin writing again. 'Am I too soon?' she asks, a little timidly."

"I don't answer. 'Don't wait for me. Go on to bed,' I finally say. It is a little like an order. I write on, '. . . abcdefg.'"

"'If you'll excuse me then,' she says."

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"'. . . hijkl . . . wxyz.' I tear up the paper."

"Going a little mad now."

"Can't help it."

"You aren't ready for bed yet?"

"I go for another bath."

"It's getting chilly and you need something to warm you up."

"Chilly? I don't notice. I feel twisted somehow. I soak like a moron for an hour or so, and when I get out I'm a real apparition. Boiling red. I get back to the room and she is in bed. The light is on by her pillow."

"Is she asleep?"

"Her eyes are open. Her face is pale. Her lips are drawn tight and she stares at the ceiling. I take some sleeping medicine and get into bed."

"With her?"

"No. After I have been in bed about five minutes I get up quietly . . . no, I get up briskly."

"You want to cry."

"I'm angry. I glance at her. She is tense. I feel better. I open my suitcase and take out a book. *Sneers* by Kafu or some such. I get back into bed. I turn my back to her and forget myself in the book."

"Isn't Kafu a little unfragrant?"

"Make it the Bible then."

"I see what you mean, but . . ."

"Maybe something in the nature of an illustrated romance?"

"What you read is very important. We shall have to give it some thought. Ghost stories? There must be something . . . Pascal would be too stiff. Some sentimental poems? Too near. There must be something."

"I know. My own book. My short stories."

"And so we enter the wilderness."

"I begin with the preface. I read on and on, but I have little idea what I am reading. Save me, I am saying."

"She has a husband, I suppose,"

"Behind me I heard a sound like the flowing of water. I shuddered. It was a very slight sound, but it touched me like a flame. She had turned over quietly in bed."

"And then?"

"I'm going to die, I said. She too . . ."

"Stop. You're not making this up."

He was right. The next day the woman and I tried suicide together. She was not a geisha and not a painter. She was a woman of poor family who worked in my house as a maid.

She turned over in bed, and because of it she died. I survived. It is seven years now, and I am still alive.

CHERRIES

I LIKE to think that parents are more important than children. Sometimes I tell myself that those moralists are to be commended who say that everything is for the children. But then I ask why that should be so, when the parents are the weaker. They are in my house at least. I'm not so impertinent as to suggest that my children should look after me when I am old; yet whatever I do I must first see if they approve. They are very young, the girls seven and one, and the boy four, and already they are tyrants. We show all the submissiveness before them of the parlour-maid and the groom.

It is summer. We are together in this narrow little room, and we have just had a clamorous dinner. I wipe savagely at the sweat on my face.

"It is inelegant to sweat while you eat," someone said. "I don't care how elegant you are, you sweat with children like these around." I talk half to myself.

Their mother nurses the baby and serves me and the other two, and picks up and wipes up, and blows noses, a fearsome display of virtuosity.

"Your father seems to sweat most around the nose. He is always dabbing at his nose."

I smile wryly. "And you? Between the thighs, I suppose."

"Everything your father says is in such good taste."

"This is a scientific conversation. Taste has nothing to do with it."

"I . . ." She looks serious for a moment. "Here, between the breasts. The valley of tears."

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The valley of tears.
I go on eating in silence.

AROUND the house I am frolicsome, and in my heart I am quite the opposite. Not only with the family. When guests come I am gay. No matter how unhappy, no matter how unwell I may feel, I am desperate to be gay. And when the guests have gone, I reel from the effort I have made. I think of money, of ethics, of suicide. It is the same with my writing. When I feel most wretched I sit down and write something light and frothy. I look upon this as a great expenditure for others, but they do not take it that way. He is getting shallow, they say, he is trying to win us with tricks.

I am thoroughly tired of grave and serious things. I frolic about the house, but it is as though I were walking on very thin ice. I disappoint my critics and my readers because the floor of my room is clean, my desk is neat, my wife and I seem to get along well and to respect each other, I have never struck her, I have never ordered her out of the house and she has never vowed to leave, we treat our children well and they seem open and happy before us.

That is the surface. She has her valley of tears, I the sweat in my sleep. Both get gradually worse. Each of us knows the other's sore spots and tries not to brush against them. I joke and she laughs.

But when she speaks of her valley of tears I can think of nothing to say. I try to produce a joke, but none comes. I eat silently. The pressure has been too much, and I, always the polished and the laughing, am without a smile.

"You will have to get someone to help you," I say softly, timidly, hoping not to annoy her.

There are the three children. I am no use around the house. I can't even make a bed. I make foolish jokes. I know nothing of rations and registrations. I might as well be living in a hotel. Guests, parties. I take my lunch and go off to get some work done, and sometimes I stay a week and don't deign a word of explanation. I insist that I have much to do, but I can accomplish little. A page or two a day, and the rest of the time I drink. I overdrink and lose weight, I take to bed. "And it appears too that he has young girl friends here and there."

THE children . . . the girls take cold rather easily, but for the most part they are normal. But the boy. He is scrawny, and at four he still can't stand up. He says "Ah" and "Da" and no more, and he understands nothing that is said to him. He crawls about the house, he has not yet learned to go to the toilet. He eats enormously, and still he is scrawny, his hair is thin, he seems not to grow.

We avoid talking about him. Idiot, mute . . . to bring the words out into the open, to admit that they might have some relevance, would be too much for us. Sometimes she takes him up hard in her arms, and sometimes I find myself wanting of a sudden to carry him to the river and jump in.

"Kills deaf-mute son. X. (53) killed his deaf-mute son Y. (18) with a hatchet in his home on —— Street —— afternoon. He then attempted suicide by driving scissors into his throat, and was taken to a near-by hospital where he is in a critical condition. A daughter (22), recently married, is living at home. Her position has been so difficult that he felt something must be done, X. said. Y. was feebleminded as well as mute."

I read this and I find I need a drink.

If it were only that he is slow. If only he would suddenly come out of it, be annoyed at us, ridicule us for our lack of confidence. We continue to hope, and we have told neither friends nor relatives of his disability. We play with him and laugh at him as though nothing were wrong.

His mother drives herself I know. But I try too. I have never been able to write fast. I am timid, and to write is to bring myself out for everyone to look at. I am embarrassed, I find it hard to go ahead. And I drink. I drink because I cannot push my demands. People who are good at demanding do not drink. (And so women seldom drink.)

I have never won an argument. I am overcome by another's confidence, by the sureness and force with which he states his case. I am silenced. I begin to see his wilfulness, and I note that I have not been entirely wrong. But having once lost, it seems perverse to open the argument again, and an argument is as painful for me as a fist fight. Trembling with anger, I

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laugh. I am silent. I think of many things, and in the end I drink.

But I must be direct. I have wandered, and this is the story of a domestic quarrel.

Valley of tears.

That is the beginning. We have been rather a quiet couple, never shouting, certainly never swearing at each other. But the quietness carries with it a certain explosiveness. It is not impossible that we have been silently gathering our evidence, that of a sudden one of us, picking up a card and laying it down, picking another up and laying it down, will spread out a completed hand. She is what she is, and certainly I have my shortcomings, as many of them as she cares to look for.

Valley of tears.

I brood over it, I distort it. And yet I do not want to quarrel. I remain silent. You are blaming me, I say to myself. You hint that I am responsible. But you are not the only one who sheds tears. I am with you. I worry about the children as much as you do, and when one of them coughs in the night I am awake listening. I want more than anything to get a better house. But I am not up to it. It is all I can do to keep this one. There is not much point in looking on me as a fiend. I quite lack the mettle to sit and coolly watch you go to ruin. I would like well enough to know about rations and registrations, but I do not have the time. . . . I cannot steel myself to say any of this.

Instead I say, "You will have to get someone to help you." I say it tentatively, half to myself.

She tends to be quiet, but when she speaks she speaks with a cold confidence (not only she; most women).

"I couldn't find anyone to work here."

"You could if you tried. What you mean is you couldn't find anyone who would stay."

"Which is to say that I couldn't handle a maid?"

"Did I say that?" I am silent again. She has as a matter of fact hit on exactly what I have been thinking.

If only we could get someone to help. When she has to go out she takes the baby with her. and I am left to take care of the other two. And every day there are a dozen callers or so.

"I'm going to get some work done."

"Now?"

"Now. I have to finish it this evening. I absolutely have to."

That is the truth, but more than that I have to get away from the house.

"I wanted to go to my sister's this evening."

I know that. The sister is dangerously ill. But if she goes out I have to take care of the children.

"That's why you ought to get someone to . . ." I stop. We cannot touch upon her family, no matter how gently, without bringing on new tensions.

A complex of chains this life is. Chains in every direction, and you bleed each time you try to move.

I go to the desk, take out some money that has come for one of my stories, and put it in my pocket. I wrap some manuscript paper and a dictionary in a black scarf. I go out as though I saw no reason why it should call for comment.

But I am not thinking about work. I am thinking about suicide. I go straight to a bar.

"Good evening."

"Something to drink. Stripes again tonight, I see. Don't you look beautiful."

"It's not bad, is it? I thought you might like it."

"I had a fight with my wife today. Couldn't stand it around the house any more. A drink, a drink! I'm going to stay all night. Absolutely."

I like to think that parents are more important than children. Parents are weaker than children.

Someone brings out cherries.

We don't give the children luxuries at my house. For all I know they've never even seen a cherry. They would probably like cherries. They would probably be happy if I were to bring home some cherries. They could dangle cherries by their stems on a string and make a coral necklace.

I take cherries from the bowl as though I were bored with them. I eat a cherry and spit out the seed, eat a cherry and spit out the seed. And in my mind, defiant: Parents are more important than children.

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Christopher Isherwood

The Head of a Leader

COMME il est beau!" someone murmured in my ear, at the moment of our first meeting—and I agreed without hesitation. He *was* beautiful, with the immediately striking, undeniable beauty of a peacock, or a great lady of the theatre. But, as he advanced to greet us from the hotel doorway—the smallest central figure of a little group—I couldn't help noticing that the square vigorous body was a trifle too short for his splendid silver head—the head which a dictator had valued at five thousand dollars.

A girl introduced us, and I found myself looking into those famous, burning dark eyes, which every photograph had failed to reproduce: "Ah . . . Mr. Isherwood. This is a great pleasure." His lips parted, in the most flattering, the most imperious of smiles. Then the glance hardened, became penetrating, commanding. Still grasping my hand, steering me by the elbow, he led me a little aside from the others. They drew back respectfully to let us pass, like the staff officers of a general who wishes to confer with an important messenger. "Tell me, first—what do you think of Portugal? Ah, we shall have much to talk about!"

But, throughout supper, it was he who did most of the talking—and I was glad, like the others, merely to sit and listen; to follow, with amused, willing admiration, his every gesture and word. He was all that I had hoped for—more brilliant, more convincing than his books; more daring than his most epic deeds. It was easy enough to see him on that cinema platform, fifteen years ago, when he told the workers; "You must occupy the factories. You must resist." I could picture him at the magnificent moment of defeat, crying out to his judges: "You can silence me. You can never silence History." I watched him pace his cell, five years long, in the mountain fortress, aloof and dangerous as the untamed tiger. Yes, he had done all that. And he could do it again—tomorrow, if need be. The years, which had cloaked him with authority, had left the vital spark untouched. The man of forty was as undaunted as the boy of twenty-five.

We spoke of Portugal. "A great change is coming soon to this country," he told us. "The peasants live like the humblest animals. Feudalism is still a reality. But there is much discontentment. The forces of Progress are working underground. The masses are learning to read, and their primer is the Communist Manifesto. It is passed from hand to hand, secretly, like a precious diamond, or a bomb."

"But, Ernst, how can you possibly *know* that?" one of the boldest members of the party, a beautiful young girl, interrupted: "Why, you've only been here forty-eight hours. And you don't even speak the language!"

Not the smallest trace of displeasure, or impatience, was visible. With perfect good humour, the lordly, flattering eyes paid tribute to her youth, her charm; pardoned her inexperience: "My dear Mary," his voice was very gentle, "I do not know these things. I feel them. Why should I wish to deceive you? You can trust me."

We could trust him, as thousands had trusted him, unreservedly, absolutely. Somebody proposed his health, and we drank it, in the local red wine of Cascaes, which is sour as the blood of the exploited peasants. Slightly blood-drunk, I looked down from a vast height at our party, sitting there in the garden, under the vine-leaves and stars, and saw this evening as a sentence in a great book, a classic, which would one day be written—probably by

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Ernst himself. Later, he told funny stories, and began to sing, in a fine tenor, the songs of his own, ungrateful country. He was in excellent spirits. He made us all laugh. Yet even this moment was somehow solemn, and epic. The general was entertaining his troops; building up their morale on the night before a desperate battle.

It was two years before I saw him again, in London, at a time when the newspapers were full of his activities. Single-handed, he was conducting a propaganda campaign on behalf of his compatriots, the starving refugees who were now scattered over half Europe. His success was sensational. He had contrived, somehow, to reach audiences outside the circles of the Left. He had touched the heart of the huge, apathetic Public. He had caught the ears of the right people, the Powers, and the powers behind the Powers. They invited him to their houses, as an honoured guest. Even the conservative press spoke well of him. He was in the process of becoming a respectable institution.

At last, one evening, I ran into him, in the middle of Regent Street. It was shortly before midnight, and I had just come out of the Café Royal. Hardly to my surprise, he recognised me at once—it was only natural, I felt, that his memory for faces, like everything else about him, should be regal: "Ah, Isherwood! Good that we meet! And now we shall be together for a few hours, I hope? Tell me, where can we talk?"

I was feeling dreadfully tired; and I had to get up early in the morning, to leave London on a long journey. But such was the epic quality of his presence that I felt childishly ashamed to have to admit that I was on my way home to bed. Revolutionaries never sleep. So I muttered something about an important engagement—some kind of meeting, I hinted—and added, with cowardly cunning: "But Stephen's in there. I've just left him. I'm sure he'd be delighted to see you." Stephen was a mutual friend.

He accepted my excuses benevolently, with a little pat on the shoulder. He seemed amused and touched by my slight embarrassment: "Stephen is in there? Good. I shall surprise him." And, turning to a charming, dark-haired girl who, as I now became aware for the first time, had been accompanying him, he commanded, with the most regally natural simplicity: "Please get me a flower."

The girl showed no surprise. She must have been accustomed to this sort of thing. She turned back at once, in the direction of Piccadilly Circus, leaving us together on the pavement, dividing the slowly moving current of the passers-by.

"You have heard about my work?" he asked, immediately.

"Yes, indeed," I said.

"It is tremendous, Isherwood. Tremendous. I tell you, this has been a revelation to me—of what can be done with these people. In all my experience, I should not have believed it possible. You know my secret? I have discovered how to treat them!"

"And how do you treat them?"

"You see, these men are accustomed to rule an Empire. To be obeyed. They are educated to believe in discipline. They do not understand a mere request. They ignore it. They despise it. But they can understand an order!"

"An order?" I laughed. "That doesn't sound very easy."

"It *is* easy!" His dark eyes flashed superbly. "At first, I made many mistakes. I wrote letters, very polite: 'Could you please spare me one hundred pounds?' No answer. Then I got impatient, angry. I telegraphed: 'Send one thousand.' And I received it immediately. Immediately! By return post!"

He was as delighted as a child. I nodded encouragingly, being careful not to smile.

"Yes, it is easy. . . . But when one sees what could be done in this country—what one man with the absolute determination could achieve . . . I think to myself: Suppose this power were to be used for evil? For destruction? Seriously, Isherwood, there are moments when I feel frightened!"

But he didn't look frightened. Standing there, under the street-lamp, he seemed positively drunk with triumph—the fine nostrils were dilated, the lips curved in an imperial smile. His vanity wasn't ridiculous. He wore it superbly. It became him, like a brilliant jewel.

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We were interrupted by the girl's return. I had expected her to come back empty-handed; but, to my astonishment, she was carrying a large white chrysanthemum. Goodness knows where, at that late hour, she had found, stolen, or bought it. He accepted it as a matter of course; thanking her merely with a small gracious nod. Then, clasping my hand, he told me: "It was a great pleasure, Isherwood. We shall meet again soon. I have something I wish to discuss with you—you will be able to help me, I think. Goodbye."

Holding the flower like a sceptre, attended by the dark-haired girl, he turned and entered the Café.

I MUST confess that, after this, I began to avoid him. During the weeks which followed, I heard several complaints from my friends of the tasks he had contrived to set them—one was ordered to produce letters of introduction, another to use his influence with an important uncle, a third had to translate an entire blank-verse play. He found uses for everybody, even the humblest. And no one had ventured to refuse. I knew, only too well, that I shouldn't have the moral courage to refuse him, myself—and I was extremely busy, just then. So I kept away from parties at which I knew he would be present. When, two or three times, he rang me up, he was always told that I was out.

But there was no escaping him for long. One afternoon he caught me, drinking coffee with a publisher, amidst the biscuit-coloured columns and immemorially ancient leather sofas of a Pall Mall club. He sat down at once, uninvited, at our table, and mildly scandalised the waiter by asking for a cream bun: "My task here is almost finished," he told us. "Next week I shall sail for the United States."

In his hand was an oddly shaped brown-paper parcel. He unwrapped it slowly, with great deliberation, glancing up at our faces to enjoy the suspense he was dramatically creating: "The man who gave me this has a little shop in the Tottenham Court Road. I have been in to see him once or twice. Today, he said to me: 'I have read about your work in the newspapers. I wish you to take this as a present from me.' Wasn't it a charming thought?"

The paper fell back. Before us stood a small bronze bust of Goethe. Neither the publisher nor myself found any suitable comment.

"Was it not charming?" he insisted delightedly. "This poor shopkeeper—he wished to give me some token of his appreciation for what I had done. And, mind you, he was not a foreigner, like myself. He was an Englishman. Just an ordinary Englishman."

His mood changed. He became thoughtful, preoccupied. He turned the bust slowly, with his long, delicately moulded fingers:

"Goethe . . . ." he mused, "if he had lived today—would he have been on our side? Would he have been reliable?" He looked up at us suddenly, shook his head: "I am afraid not."

After a suitable pause, the publisher asked him if he would have some more coffee.

"No thank you. No." He rose at once to his feet, cramming the bust and its paper into his pocket. "I am late already." He bowed hastily, and strode down the corridor. At the corner, he stopped—stationing himself in the shadows of the Library entrance, like an assassin. From this position, he called to us, with mock-conspiratorial gaiety: "I am waiting for the Archbishop!"

I thought I could slip away quietly, but I was wrong. Just as I had reached the foot of the staircase, he called after me: "Isherwood! One moment!" I started guiltily at the sound of my name.

"Isherwood, you must do me a great kindness. Next Tuesday, I embark on the 'Normandie.' While I am on board, I wish to receive a cablegram, signed by six famous writers, appealing to President Roosevelt to use his influence to help me on my mission. . . . There must be at least six names—all world-famous. You understand?"

Yes, I understood. As I left the Club, I sighed deeply.

IT WAS in New York that we met again—for the fourth and last time. Six months had passed. The Spanish civil war was over. The Dictators, in the hour of their triumph, were uttering new threats. On a beautiful cold spring afternoon I crossed Central Park to the hotel at which he was staying.

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He opened the door to me himself. To my surprise, I found him quite alone.

"You must please excuse all this untidiness," he told me. "If I had known that you were coming, I would have made some preparations."

Even as we sat down, I was struck by the change in his appearance, and in his manner. He looked older, yellower, thinner. The black eyes were sombre, and almost gentle. And his pleasure at my visit was quite touching.

"How are you, my friend? What have you been doing? Please tell me some news of England."

I told him everything I could think of. I did all the talking. He listened attentively, smoking one cigarette after another. I noticed that his hands trembled a little, as he lit them. At length I asked:

"But what about your work?"

The eyes didn't brighten, as I had expected. Instead, he shrugged his shoulders slightly:

"It is accomplished. The funds have been raised. We were successful."

"I'm very glad."

"There were difficulties, of course.... When I landed in New York, I had hoped to make great publicity for the scheme, to give interviews to the Press.... But I was unlucky. Not one single journalist came to my cabin. Not one. And do you know why? They were all crowding around a foreign film actress and a dwarf!"

"A dwarf?"

"Yes. This dwarf, it seems, was particularly important, because of his extremely small size. He was more interesting to the reporters than all the thousands of my unhappy countrymen."

His disdainful smile, as he said this, had something of its old magnificence. But only for an instant. His face darkened again, into moody silence.

"And what are you doing now?" I asked him.

Once more, he shrugged his shoulders:

"I am here. As you see."

"Shall you stay long?"

"Who knows?" he sighed. "At the present, my plans are very uncertain."

Glancing round the hotel bedroom, so large and luxurious and unfriendly, and at his three scarred, shabby suitcases standing in the corner, I realised, with a slight shock, that he, who had successfully demanded so many thousands of dollars, was probably short of money. Perhaps he couldn't even pay his bill. He seemed to know what I was thinking, for he smiled, sadly and gently, as he walked across to the window.

"You know," he told me, "I long very greatly to return to Europe."

"You don't like it here?"

"I hate it." He said this quietly, quite without passion, stating a simple fact.

"Look," he pointed. "Over there is the Zoological Garden. You have seen the sea-lions?"

"Yes. I've seen them."

"When I am lying in bed at night, I can hear them. And sometimes it seems to me that they are angry, that they are crying aloud to demand the destruction of this city."

I laughed. We both looked out, at the white shafts of the skyscrapers, splendid in the pale sunshine, along the edge of the park.

I told him: "A friend of mine calls them The Fallen Angels."

"The Fallen Angels? Good. Very good...." I could watch his mind playing with the idea. "One might write something ...." he began. Then he checked himself, paused; said, with sudden decision: "Isherwood, you must write about this town. You must write a great drama, or a novel."

It was a command—one of his many commands. But I couldn't accept it meekly: "Why don't you," I suggested, "write that novel yourself?"

He shook his head—and the finality of this refusal was the last memory of him which I was to carry away with me. "No, Isherwood. No. I shall never write about this country. I have come here too late."

*** *** ***

THE model for this character-sketch was actually Ernst Toller, the famous German writer and revolutionary.

In May, 1939—about six weeks after my meeting with him in New York described

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above—he committed suicide. This sketch was written that same summer, and I wrote it as fiction because it might otherwise have seemed offensive. Even so, I found that I didn't care to publish it then. Now, fourteen years later, I feel that I can and should. Biographically, these conversations and episodes may be quite unreliable —I have even forgotten which details are invented—but as subjective impressions they are genuine; and perhaps they may give some readers a faint brief glimpse of a great, unhappy, fascinating man.

LAGO

Não perturbem o lago
Não lhe atirem pedras
Nem barcos de papel, nem folhas mortas

As águas sofreriam de ser ondas.

LAKE

Touch not the lake;
throw not stones in it;
nor boats of paper, nor dead leaves.

The waters would suffer to be waves.

——*Alberto de Lacerda*

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Edith Sitwell

Two Songs

I. A MI-VOIX

After the long heat
Beside the fountain cave
A girl blond as the wave

Sat combing her long hair blond as the gilded flight of bees
In the great sunny vines of Venus—singing
"O love who art half totem beast, half god,
O wind—O golden hero—come to my branches!"

But an old woman, jealous of that spring,
And wrinkled as the earth, sighed "You, young vine,
Whose skin is like the amber grapes the Sun and Sirius
Have gilded, draw his heart as the amber the poor straw!

But hark to the sound of the long Lethe flowing
The sound of Time in your veins growing!
Once I was young like you—
My breasts were the bright swans on Lethe river—
No more swan-bright, swan-smooth!

Now after the long heat
The desert whence the seas of love retreat
Sees me, a mummy calm as afternoon
Let fall from the gold mask of my eternal sleep
The azoic tears the desert sun doth weep.

Lovely was I as Idleness,
But now for all companion the giantess Shade—
(That last horizon whence the seas have gone,
Green Africa calm as palm-trees) by
My side is lying."

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II. AN OLD SONG RE-SUNG

Where is all the bright company gone—
The Trojan Elaine and the Knight Sir Gavaine?
Why have they glided out of the rain?
The Queens were bright as the waters' sheen,
Bountiful, beautiful as the grain,
The Knights were brighter than stars in the sky—
(The moons thick as roses in hot July)—
As bright as the raindrops and roses in June.
And many and merry as notes in a tune,
Alas, they are gone and I am alone—
For all they glided out of the rain.
And now I sit under the bright apple tree
And weep that ever that speech was spoken
That the false angel said unto me:
For had I never the apple-branch broken.
Death had not fallen on mankind and me!

NOTE: lines 13 and 14 are from *Eva's Lament* in the Coventry Plays.

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Denis de Rougemont

Looking for India

NEW nations have nervous Customs officials, but those of India are self-possessed—a trait left over from the British. Still, it takes them more than an hour to impress on us the proof of a sovereignty no one thinks of contesting. We are asked a series of questions. The official is not entirely convinced by our answers, he feels the need for something more familiar. Finally he asks us: "Where will you stay?"—"At the Taj Mahal Hotel." A smile of relief. "At the Taj? O.K."

O.K.? That is the least one would say of it. It is more than a hotel, it is a whole area of the city, in a single building topped off by a dome. Inside, two passages lined with luxury shops, cafés, and bookstores lead to the central lounge, which opens on an enormous patio in which vehicles incessantly come and go. My room is thirty-two feet long and sixteen feet wide; the ceiling is sixteen feet high. A large, four-bladed fan hangs from it, operated by an electric switch; three speeds. Grey, polished tiles on the floor, yellow walls, a great deal of furniture. When I ring, three servants appear before a dark tapestry at the other end of the room, without a sound. It sometimes happens that I ring again, having heard no one come, and then perceive that they have already been there for a long moment. Why three? I tell myself that the first takes the orders, the second probably records them, and the third carries them out. But no, there are, quite simply, too many people in India.

I have napped for a while under the slow hum of the fan. I ring to ask for tea. The three white forms appear in the shadows. I fall asleep again. Awakening, I find the tea is there, and the three men in white once more, at the table. I ask them for sugar. They smile and bow. They have pencils in their hands, and pads of paper. They wait. I tell them that is all I want. But they would like to ask me some questions. My opinion of Indian neutrality? Of Nehru? A flash of magnesium. Blinded, I understand, and make an effort to give the answers they are expecting, struck suddenly by the similarity between the passport inspection and the interview.

BOMBAY, the gate of India, presents the visitor with the architecture and the swarming traffic of a great Western city, of the kind one sees in South America, more uniformly modern than those of Europe. I note a mild frustration of my sense of the exotic.

The kind of curiosity, always edged with fervour, that the term exotic evokes—there is nothing more typically Western. Among the peoples of the earth only Westerners seem to seek out the foreign, the unfamiliar, for its own sake, and are disappointed at finding it not as pure and disconcerting as they had dreamed. For the Indian, the Chinese, the Arab, the alien has never been a subject for literature, for conscious and cultivated nostalgia: he may well be the stronger, indeed for centuries he was, but essentially he is in the wrong. This conviction, still alive in Western countrysides and behind the curtains of provincial houses, has long since been repudiated by our voyaging élites, in whom the reverse belief predominates. Before the "hideous vulgarity" of the Occident, to use a phrase of André Gide's, all nobility of gesture and bearing, all solemnity of religion seem to have taken refuge in the Orient, in Africa, in Oceania . . . . Incapable of belief in anything, we fly to admire those who venerate cows.

The man who knows his gods conceives himself as living in a universe ordered by them.

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The Occidental, who no longer has this notion of himself, goes elsewhere to see how it is possible for men to believe, but with no serious desire to share the faith of those whom he admires simply because they do believe.

Having said this, I will have no rest until I have discovered, in my turn, behind the immense façade of synthetic Occidental quais, glittering with ochre, glazed brick, chrome, and the luxurious reflections of thousands of plate-glass windows, the Dark Thing, seething and mysterious, lurking somewhere quite nearby perhaps, like the dream under the waking state, imminent and yet hidden, the Dark Thing sensed dimly which sometimes flashes to us, amid the well-ordered traffic of these streets, brief and always disquieting signals: the sudden, angry cry of a lean crow at my window, the sharp shadow of a vulture gliding over the roadway, the red gobs of spittled betelnut on the sidewalk, the stumps of charming and menacing arms . . . . In the port and before the great hotels, little girls with unsmiling eyes, with bodies incredibly slender, barely covered by a shred of cotton, slip their little arms, cut off at the elbow, into the huge American cars, an instant before the doors are slammed. One catches the door which was about to smash them, one throws them a few coins, but they always come back, with an almost ferocious insistence, with a little cry, hostile and guttural, like that of the crows, the cry of that savage misery which alone, in this humid furnace, still rouses the energies of the human animal.

"WHAT are you looking for?" says R., whom I run into in the lounge of the Taj. (He looks like a gipsy with his black curls; he is a Brahmin and, by deliberate choice, very orthodox, therefore very open-minded.)

"I am looking for India. Will I find it in Bombay?"

He calls a taxi, and we are off.

We leave the car at the entrance to a narrow alley and walk down it slowly to a steep, twisting stairway, set between tall, yellow-painted houses. There are statuettes festooned with silk and flowers, as at Naples. There are also young girls dressed in saris sitting on the steps, with diamonds in their nostrils, their ankles heavy with rings and bells. But the setting is Italian. (And the same very pale rose, slightly mauve, tint to the cottons which I had not seen anywhere but in Italy and, more rarely, Brazil.) We go down the stairway, which opens on to an irregularly shaped square paved with beaten earth and planted with trees from which the bark has been stripped away. On the left a disorderly line of straggling houses. On the right a long, rectangular basin, filled with green, deep water. All around the basin, and on the island which occupies its centre, there are columns of black stone bristling with what look like half-saucers; they are lamps, which are lit on holiday evenings.

We enter a winding street, lined with little one- or two-storey houses, like warped and tottering bird-cages, minuscule cafés whose balconies extend over the basin, and what look like garages or stables, one does not know which, with large, barred gates: the temples. Deep in the shadows, an altar is illuminated. Red and gold cloth behind the statuette, jewels, flowers, little glass trinkets, and in the narrow space before the altar a woman standing, motionless. Sometimes the priest in a loincloth emerges from a dark corner to set two little sticks of burning incense down beside a low fountain in the little courtyard. All this takes place in view of the street, a few feet away from the men sprawled in the shops, from the barefooted passers-by who go up and down without casting at us a glance of their fixed and burning eyes. A half-naked creature passes us, very old, its skull cropped and two breasts hanging down to its stomach. Women with unbelievably thin and graceful limbs. Little noise, and not a single smile. A temple bell rings, unmusically. One hears the shuffling of bare feet, the swish of pink, violet, and pale-green saris. Eyes gleam in the dark doorways. Here and there a man prays, squatting against a wall. An air of enigmatic and insidious solemnity hangs over the whole quarter, which has about it something dreamlike and animal. Everything is delicate, feline, miserable, and precious, all at once. I feel too heavy and too big in my European clothing.

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A little further on, where the street turns and grows lighter, towards the black rocks and lowlands along the seashore, a group of seated men are listening to a man reading aloud. Seated on a bench, the reader holds a large, bound volume open on his knees. He is still young, thickset, with very dark skin and large white eyes, serious and slow. R. asks him what he is reading. It is part of the Mahabharata. Young and old, his hearers listen motionlessly to the book from which Gandhi read passages to his disciples every night. I do not know if I have ever seen anything more touching, or a group of men more simple and dignified in the act of hearing a poem.

Later, returning up the slopes of Malabar Hill by roads squeezed between the estate-walls of great, luxurious dwellings, a saint went by us. "Who is he?" I asked my friend as I caught sight of him. "A holy man," he answered distractedly.—"But a real one or a charlatan?"—"How can one tell? There are so many."

He walked slowly, with long, dignified steps, preceded by his enormous, deeply bronzed stomach, dressed in a red beard that fanned out to his shoulders, a rope that hung from his neck down to his navel, and a loincloth. He marked time for his long, slow paces by beating the ground with a stick. Behind him crowded three smaller men, one on the heels of the other, the first very short and fat, the second gaunt, the tendons of his ankles standing out like cords, and the third stocky, with a shaven skull from the back of which jutted a kind of horse's tail. The holy man paraded his importance, his three followers seemed intent on stressing the fact that they followed.

The priest, the swami, the holy man; the holier they are, the nakeder, not decked out with robes and surplices in imitation of princes and kings, like our ecclesiastic dignitaries, always more richly clad the higher they mount in the sacred hierarchy. Have not our movements of religious reform always begun with a passionate return to spiritual nudity? Sometimes this has even manifested itself physically, from St. Francis to the Doukhobors.

In the drawing-room of a huge residence, emptied of furniture, against the backdrop of a single length of black silk embroidered with large golden symbols spread over one wall, we have been watching S. perform some of the classic dances of ancient India. She was accompanied by two little groups of musicians, seated on the floor on both sides of the stage.

The subtle dissymmetry of her gestures, accentuated by the oblique forward movements of her chin, themselves precisely linked with the movements of her arms, her fingers, her ankles, have given me an understanding of Hindu sculpture; the postures of the gods, which seem monotonous, and sometimes curiously affected, are figures from the dance of Siva, an absolutely precise ritual language interpreting the cosmic process of becoming.

Moved by so many studied beauties, the dancer and her steps, each of which had a meaning, the sumptuous splendour of the silks, the colours, the jewels, I reflected that the thought of "bad taste" becomes inconceivable in India, although so excessive a combination of riches could not have failed to evoke it at home. It is because here nothing depends on "taste," every form and every gesture are dictated by the ritual, and clothed in its authority. What followed troubled me more, however, and I shall speak of it in some detail.

Before the silk backdrop, two round-faced giants with enormous black moustaches and a surprising expression of placidity make their appearance. They are dressed in blue blouses and long white trousers, tight in the calves, and each of them carries a white stick like that of a French policeman. The introducer announces a "stick-dance" symbolising the duel of twin gods.

The music begins softly, a beat sustaining two or three notes repeated over and over. Lying on the ground at first, back to back, the dancers strike their crossed sticks against each other very feebly; then they turn slowly on their sides, striking a little more strongly; raise themselves into a sitting position, still striking; get up and walk with long steps, knees bent, striking more and more forcefully; and, when their dance reaches its climax, swinging their sticks in front of them, to the side, behind their heads, with incredible violence—if they had missed a single crossing of the sticks and landed

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a blow to the head they would both have fallen unconscious. The noise of the sticks rattling against each other resembles the fierce combat of mounted warriors, while the monotonous music beats time for the blows with implacable precision. Decrescendo. Now they are almost seated once more, supporting themselves against the ground with one hand, striking with the other; then they lie down, still striking feebly, and at last become immobile. The music stops without a conclusion, as if it made no great difference where it stopped. The two placid-faced giants pick themselves up and seat themselves among the musicians.

"Is it beautiful, or grotesque, or both?" my neighbour whispers to me. But what surprises me most is the inhumanity (to our Western senses) of these two absolutely identical beings devoid of all expression, their disquieting, impenetrable naïveté, their total and animal possession by the rhythm of the music, and the blows unleashed at precise intervals, like the release of an insane energy, without the slightest trace of passion.

No, neither "beautiful" nor "grotesque" applies here. The dance of the two moustached and childish Atlases reaches us, perhaps, out of a Mongol past, and gives me an insight into Asia disquieting in a quite different way. How can one express what is so foreign as this with concepts formulated by Europe? And how suggest the obscure feeling, hardly to be distinguished from anguish, that here the I, the central ego, does not exist?

These dancers are representations of their role, symbolic functions, without separate or individual consciousness. I am tempted to push the idea to its limits, to imagine that they are nothing but irreducible flesh, virility in its pure state. They are as tyrannically determined by the beat of the instruments and the dynamic figures of the dance as an animal by his instincts. Without problems, without contradictions, without duality of consciousness, and therefore without the possibility of freedom of any kind, if it is true that all freedom presupposes some deep-seated disjunction between the I and destiny. It seems to me, on the edge of understanding, that I have at least just seen why Asia can accept castes, remain unaware of the person, and hold the individual, his sufferings, and even his life, cheap; why its ancient splendours seem to the West alternately insanely beautiful and insanely cruel, hideous or fascinating like the figures of a dream, intensely accurate but without proportion, fraught with unspeakable significance but capable at any moment of merging completely into each other, like the animals and the gods in the endless metamorphoses of fable and myth.

The purely Indian quarter of Bombay. How do the autos get by without sowing death at every moment in this crowd of men in white walking in every direction between the two sidewalks, when it is necessary to swerve, without so much as grazing them, around the cows squatting or lying on their sides in the very centre of the roadway. It is better to walk, following the line of stalls slowly through the smells of burning oil, incense, or the flowers that fill the fresh-looking baskets. In the furnace of a little square, towards noon, I hesitate between three narrow streets. Through a gateway, I catch sight of a shadowy courtyard; my first impulse is to enter. My guide pulls me by the sleeve: the precinct is sacred. A man on the threshold makes a sign. I do not understand. I pass the porch.

Gripped, as soon as I enter, by the shadows and the silence, I try to fix in my memory as many as possible of the things I see around me in the brief instant I can stay there, observed, guarded, repulsed by all these hostile and insistent eyes.

On the large stone tiles the urine of the sacred cows spreads slowly in great puddles. On the right, under an open shed, there are zebus tied to the edge of a watering trough. On the left a huge pipal—the tree sacred to Vishnu—whose leaves shelter the whole court. In the tangle of grey roots that forms its trunk there are pink and violet flowers, shaped to form a votive offering. In front of me a few steps lead to a slightly raised terrace. The men seated on its rim, legs dangling, stare at me. At the foot of the tree, a little fountain and an altar loaded with flowers and offerings. A man stands there praying, then half-turns towards the other side of the courtyard, moving his lips. I follow his

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look and discover, in a recess beyond the watering-trough, a blue-green, rococo building, heavy with turrets and bas-reliefs, that reminds me of a fair-ground pavilion, and is a temple. This whole courtyard, with its cows and their sacred urine, its tree, its altar, its fountain, its floral offerings, and its mute faithful is really the antechamber of the temple. Whence its look of solemnity, even seen casually from the street. Further on, in the prolongation of the terrace, I can see houses through the leaves, children playing, linen hanging.

An arrested, hieratic atmosphere, in the very heart of the city's wild disorder. Shade, silence, lack of movement. And the complicated composition of the ensemble, like a stage setting packed with implication. I wait for a gesture, a cry. Nothing happens. Or rather, I will never know what magical thing happens here without a sign.

HINDUISM—no Church, no hierarchy, no parishes, no organisation; no belief in God, no theology, no creed or catechism; no liturgy either, since no public rites exist, not even common worshipping, except for the periodic processions and festivals; not much respect, even, for the priests, who are regarded as a kind of servant-class in charge of the temples, useful for their knowledge of the rites of birth and death, but quite inferior to the Brahmins.

How does this religion subsist without institutions or collective disciplines of any kind? It is transmitted by the family, by the respect for caste, by the study of the Vedic hymns, and especially by the schools of the Masters. The rites are familial, or even individual. In this country where the streets swarm dizzyingly, where the number of men judged necessary by Westerners for a given task is multiplied by three, by ten, by a hundred, where I have seen up to five people on one bicycle—father, mother, and three children—where, in short, there are too many people everywhere; in this country which does not believe in the individual as an absolute, and seems dedicated to the collectivity, devotions and religion are individualistic. And so, to an even greater degree, is salvation. I see those solitary women in the narrow temples again, intimate with the god, turning their backs on the passers-by. And those men in prayer against a wall. And the half-naked saints striding across the streets crowded with pedestrians, cows, zebus, and automobiles, going somewhere, but one does not know where, and cannot help asking oneself the question—and of them alone in the infinite crowd, because they alone are really distinct, walking towards something other than their own nature, when all the rest are determined by function, species, and caste. . . .

GALA dinner given by the Minister of Food: vegetable bouillon, minced vegetables, curry, pastry, bitter-sweet fruits, fruit juices and ice cream, all served in little bowls which are set down incessantly and unrequested on the rim of a great silver plate before each guest.

A conversation begins between P., an English writer, and his Hindu and Parsee neighbours. P. deplores the contemporary situation of Western man, tormented by a thousand complexes, above all sexual. How is it in India? The Indians exchange a smile, hesitate a little, out of politeness no doubt, and finally say, no, they have no complexes, certainly no sexual complexes. P. insists, questions anxiously, complains of our sense of sin. The Indians continue to smile; no, really, they do not have that sense. . . .

There is much to be said about this dialogue. I return to what I wrote on the absence of contradiction in the innermost being of the Asian; it is another way of saying that he does not possess the sense of sin, and therefore that he does not have the sense of revolt either, nor that of humour, nor even that of originality, being the man of Karma and of a caste. If the suppression of caste, already accomplished *de jure*, were ever to become *de facto*, it would entail infinite consequences in all these domains. It would create a free field for personal problems, for the permanent risks of individuality and its frustration in neurosis or collective insanity, in short, for the whole spiritual adventure embarked on by the West.

In the present state of affairs it is quite understandable that our notion of originality (in the arts or in conduct) means nothing reasonable

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for the Asian as such, except for a few young intellectuals shaped by Western disciplines. He belongs to a caste, a religious sect, a definite spiritual path, a school, or a profession. Variation, individual innovation, are either overlooked or regarded as mere errors.

The Western need to be original, and, in another realm, the sense of humour, express a certain notion of the individual; isolated, despiritualised, in open or secret revolt against an order of things in essence disputable, that is to say, tainted from its very origin by a principle of injustice, unhappiness, and ineluctable incompleteness. Whence the sense of sin and the spirit of revolt, whence the idea of inevitable progress, both of them intimately linked in our history and our personal actions. So the sense of personal vocation comes to replace the timeless rôle. If it fails, one is left living in uncertainty, absurdity, or mediocrity.

Hence the lack of a spirit of revolt in the Indian. He resists all menaces to the loss of his inner nature by clinging to his identity, which is that of an order, not an ego, i.e. a separate being which will only live once. He resists without counter-attacking, without attempting to destroy an alien enemy, because all violent and non-ritual destruction runs the insane risk of changing the real, marring the order of the universe. Whence, doubtless, the idea of non-violence, the deepest form of resistance to the baneful strangeness of the enemy because it avoids the danger of communing with him in the struggle and therefore emerging contaminated.

NEHRU:—I was not wholly free from anxiety in the room in which I awaited him before the luncheon to which he had invited me, along with his daughter, his niece, and a few familiar friends. I had just come from Bombay, where our conference had ended with a resolution condemning neutralism. I had read in the plane that the Prime Minister was to return from Kashmir that very morning, after a night of travelling. He was said to be extremely irritable, particularly when involved in the problem of Kashmir, which is his native province. I was admiring the jonquils, transported fresh from the land of his birth, when he came in noiselessly, with a rapid stride. A little stooped, his manner serious and distant. He was wearing a long silk jacket, dark-purple in colour, sprinkled with grey and yellow flowers. Close-fitting white trousers, black silk slippers, his head bare. A prince of the East, as handsome as they say. A little sulky, he seemed to me at first. (At my first tentative mention of politics, he lowers his head, studying his hand poised on a cushion, without reacting. I do not know why I wondered, at that moment, if he thinks in Hindi or in English.) But at the table he is another man.

Relaxed and smiling, curious about everything, gently parrying my attempts to raise controversial issues, preferring to talk of the Indian film industry, which, he informs me, is not much behind Hollywood in quantity of production, but which he considers even worse so far as quality is concerned; speaking of the twelve major languages of India, which will replace English more and more, even in the universities—it is regrettable, but inevitable; speaking of the twenty different kinds of preserved fruit arrayed before us and watching to see if I like them; perhaps talking of everything so as not to talk of anything, amusing himself with this game while I amuse myself by following his lead.

Over the coffee, I told him of my astonishment at discovering that his country's intelligentsia presents so many analogies with the European, not only in its situation between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. but in its way of accepting or rejecting this situation. Would he approve of a plan of regular cultural exchanges between India and Europe? Our greatest experts on India are German or French, but India hardly knows Europe except through the English schools, and, on the other hand, is tempted to judge the whole West by America. But Europe is closer to India . . . . He gave himself a little tap on the knee. "That's true!" he said. "There is truth in that . . . ."

NEHRU is a Brahmin educated at Cambridge, a liberal aristocrat inclined towards socialism, of whom fate, in league with his innermost nature rather than with his ideas, has made a prince. That this pandit (i.e. "wise

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man") has become Prime Minister is one of the caprices of history. There is a great deal of caprice about Nehru. Unlike a Stalin and a Hitler, and perhaps also a Gandhi, he remains as if distinct from his historic rôle. One could say that he sees it from a distance. A moralist, in short, but one without religious faith, who replaces dogmas by a few good principles borrowed from liberalism, humanitarian socialism, and Gandhi. More impatient than authoritarian, more interested in moral nobility than in logic. His badly hidden contempt for American culture is that of a Brahmin for an inferior caste (he has written as much), not that of a Marx for a capitalism doomed to fatal crises.

In spite of these flaws, which the Indians see clearly, he is surrounded by general respect. This stems from his rôle as the liberating chieftain, but also, no less, from his great personal charm. Everyone speaks of his looks. And it is true that his face and bearing express a harmony of the Hindu soul that most of the bodies in this country, with their thin limbs, grey skin, fixed and brilliant eyes, conceal and even, to our Western eyes, contradict. In Nehru's face the soul breaks through and comes to the surface. But in his innermost being, would the eye of the spirit still find the primitive mystery which links man with his gods like a shadow with the night? Would it not find, on the contrary, the mark of inquietude and contradiction, that little secret scar which betrays the tearing-loose of the individual from the holy unconscious, from the magic body of a race? Individuality is never born except by the rupture with magic. The profound crisis of India is summed up in Nehru. I am sure of it now: this great Indian, who liberated his people from the British, thinks in English.

Delivered from the Moguls by the West, then from the West by the combined action of Gandhi, Western weaknesses, and Western ideals, will India finally find itself again? Have not six centuries of tutelage, almost of "occupation," profoundly alienated her from herself? Yes, but the "essential India" does not exist except in the West's vague notions of her mystery. Now she can only resemble what she will become. In six centuries the world has changed; an independent India would have changed too, but she was not able to do so to the accelerated rhythm of Western history. India missed her Renaissance, her Enlightenment, her Romanticism, and her revolutions. Put to sleep at the height of the middle ages, she has been awakened in the American and Russian century. She calls herself neutral, like someone who would like to go back to sleep.

But the image of awakening is deceptive. Down there I did not feel the stirring of a young people, its confidence in the future, its grandiose projects. Rather an immense embarrassment before the world others have made. Thrown into the arena of the nations in the midst of a tense struggle, India finds herself called on to participate. She has neither the equipment nor the training to do so. She does not know which side to choose. No wonder that Nehru, who must act for her on the international stage, is only tempted by the role of arbiter.

The struggle between totalitarianism and individual liberty has little interest for the majority of the Indian people, who have never known either. And yet India, as a power, must vote for or against one of these, unless it can find very strong reasons to justify its abstention. But on what positive values can Nehru base the double refusal which seems to inspire his policy? In the name of what profound fidelity, or what new ideal, can he continue to reject the double temptation? The old religious, Hindu India is still alive in the castes, the Brahmins, the peasants, and artisans, but the power is in the hands of the "secularists" who have cut themselves off from, and denied, this India. The normal process of evolution which a genuine suppression of caste would bring about, would bring India closer to the West, to Europe in particular. But so far only the intelligentsia has been affected. And its members find it far easier to acquire Western uncertainties than Western faiths. . . .

Between a past reduced to practical impotence but offering a resistance in depth, and a future still only skin-deep, India's present seems to lack substance. The West has problems. India *is* problems.

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C. Day Lewis

Pegasus

(In Memoriam : L. B. L.)

It was there on the hillside, no tall traveller's story.
A cloud caught on a whin-bush, an airing of bleached
Linen, a swan, the cliff of a marble quarry—
It could have been any of these: but as he approached,
He saw that it was indeed what he had cause
Both to doubt and believe in—a horse, a winged white horse.

It filled the pasture with essence of solitude.
The wind tiptoed away like an interloper,
The sunlight there became a transparent hood
Estranging what it revealed; and the bold horse-coper,
The invincible hero, trudging up Helicon,
Knew he had never before been truly alone.

It stood there, solid as ivory, dreamy as smoke;
Or moved, and its hooves went dewdropping so lightly
That even the wild cyclamen were not broken:
But when those hooves struck rock, such was their might
They tapped a crystal vein which flowed into song
As it ran through thyme and grasses down-along.

"Pegasus," he called, "Pegasus"—with the surprise
Of one for the first time naming his naked lover.
The creature turned its lordly, incurious eyes
Upon the young man; but they seemed to pass him over
As something beneath their pride or beyond their ken.
It returned to cropping the violets and cyclamen.

Such meekness, indifference, frightened him more than any
Rumoured Chimaera. He wavered, remembering how
This milk-white beast was born from the blood of uncanny
Medusa, the nightmare-eyed: and at once, although
Its brief glance had been mild, he felt a cringing
And pinched himself to make sure he was not changing

Into a stone. The animal tossed its head;
The white mane lifted and fell like an arrogant whinny.
"Horses are meant to be ridden," the hero said,
"Wings or no wings, and men to mount them. Athene
"Ordered my mission, besides, and certainly you
"Must obey that goddess," he cried, and flung the lassoo.

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The cyclamen bow their heads, the cicadas pause.
The mountain shivers from flank to snowy top,
Shaking off eagles as a pastured horse
Shakes off a cloud of flies. The faint airs drop.
Pegasus, with a movement of light on water,
Shimmers aside, is elsewhere, mocking the halter.

So there began the contest. A young man
Challenging, coaxing, pursuing, always pursuing
The dream of those dewfall hooves: a horse which ran
Quicksilver from his touch, sliding and slewing
Away, then immobile a moment, derisively tame,
Almost as if it entered into a game.

He summoned up his youth, his conscious art
To tire or trick the beast, criss-crossing the meadow
With a web of patient moves, circling apart,
Nearing, and pouncing, but only upon its shadow.
What skill and passion weave the subtle net!
But Pegasus goes free, unmounted yet.

All day he tried for this radiant creature. The more he
Persevered, the less he thought of the task
For which he required it, and the ultimate glory.
So it let him draw close, closer—nearly to grasp
Its mane; but that instant it broke out wings like a spread
Of canvas, and sailed off easily overhead.

He cursed Pegasus then. Anger arose
With a new desire, as if it were some white girl
To stretch, mount, master, exhaust in shuddering throes.
The animal gave him a different look: it swirled
Towards him, circled him round in a dazzling mist,
And one light hoof just knocked upon his breast.

The pale sky yawns to its uttermost concave,
Flowers open their eyes, rivulets prance
Again, and over the mountainside a wave
Of sparkling air tumbles. Now from its trance
That holy ground is deeply sighing and stirring.
The heights take back their eagles, cicadas are whirring.

The furious art, the pursuer's rhythmic pace
Failed in him now. Another self had awoken,
Which knew—but felt no chagrin, no disgrace—
That he, not the winged horse, was being broken:
It was his lode, his lord, his appointed star,
He but its shadow and familiar.

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So he lay down to sleep. Argos, Chimaera,
Athene in one solution were immersed.
Around him, on bush and blade, each dewdrop mirrored
A star, his riding star, his universe,
While on the moonlit flowers at his side
Pegasus grazed, palpable, undenied.

A golden bridle came to him in sleep—
A mesh of immortal fire and sensual earth,
Pliant as love, compulsive as the sweep
Of light-years, brilliant as truth, perfect as death.
He dreamed a magic bridle, and next day
When he awoke, there to his hand it lay.

Wings furled, on printless feet through the dews of morn
Pegasus stepped, in majesty and submission,
Towards him. Mane of tempest, delicate mien,
It was all brides, all thoroughbreds, all pent passion.
Breathing flowers upon him, it arched a superb
Neck to receive the visionary curb.

Pegasus said, "The bridle that you found
"In sleep, you yourself made. Your hard pursuit,
"Your game with me upon this hallowed ground
"Forged it, your failures tempered it. I am brute
"And angel. He alone, who taps the source
"Of both, can ride me. Bellerophon, I am yours."

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Albert Camus

The Wind at Djemila

THERE are places where the spirit dies so that a truth may be born which is the spirit's very negation. When I went to Djemila there was wind and sun—but that must wait. What has to be said first is that a great silence reigns there, heavy and without a crack. The cries of birds, the furred sound of a three-holed flute, the stamping of goats, murmurs from the sky—these are so many noises which made up the silence and desolation of the place. Now and then a dry crackling, a shrill cry, mark the flight of a bird that had crouched among the stones. Every road one follows, the paths among the ruined houses, the wide-paved streets under gleaming columns, the immense forum between the arch of triumph and the temple on its hillock, everything leads to the ravines which on every side bound Djemila, a pack of cards spread open under a sky without limits. And one finds oneself there, tense, set face to face with the stones and the silence, while the day advances and the mountains grow larger as they turn violet. But the wind blows on the plateau of Djemila. In that great confusion of wind and sun, the mingling of the light with the ruins, something is forged which gives man the measure of his identity with the solitude and silence of the dead city.

IT takes a long time to get to Djemila. It is not a city where one halts, and then goes on. It leads nowhere and opens on nothing. It is a place from which one comes back. The dead city is at the end of a long, twisting road which seems to promise it at each turning and appears thereby so much the longer. When, on a faded tableland sunk among high mountains, its yellowing skeleton rises finally, like a forest of bones, Djemila presents the symbol of that lesson of love and patience which alone can lead us to the beating heart of the world. There, amid a few trees, some dry grass, she defends herself with all her mountains and all her stones against vulgar admiration, the picturesque, or the deceptions of hope.

In this arid splendour we wandered all day long. Little by little the wind, hardly felt at the beginning of the afternoon, seemed to grow with the hours and fill the whole landscape. It blew from a gap in the mountains, far away to the east, hastened up from the depths of the horizon, and bounded, cascading, amid the stones and the sun. Without cease, it whistled powerfully through the ruins, bathed the heaps of pitted blocks, surrounded each column with its breath, and came to spill out in unceasing moans over the forum that lay open to the sky. I felt myself shaking in the wind like a mast. Hollowed out by my surroundings, eyes burning, lips cracked, my flesh became so dry that it was no longer mine. Through it, before, I had deciphered the writing of the world, the signs of its tenderness or its anger, the warmth of its breath, or the bite of its frost. But, buffeted so long by the wind, washed by it for more than an hour, dazed out of resistance, I lost consciousness of the pattern traced by my body. I was polished by the wind, worn down to the soul. I became a little of that force by which I drifted, then more, then, at last, nothing else, confounding the beating of my blood with the great sounding beat of this ever-present heart of nature. The wind fashioned me in the image of the scorching nudity that surrounded me. And its fugitive embrace gave me, a stone among stones, the solitude of a column or an olive tree against the summer sky.

This violent bath of sun and wind drained all the life from me, hardly leaving that fluttering, that grumbling, that feeble revolt of the spirit.

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Soon, spread out to the four corners of the world, I was the wind, and in the wind, these columns and this arch, these hot flagstones, and these pale mountains around the deserted city. And never have I felt so strongly both my detachment from myself and my presence in the world.

YES, I am present. And what strikes me at this moment is that I can go no further. Like a man condemned to life imprisonment, for whom everything is in the present, but who also knows that tomorrow will be the same, and all the other days. Because for a man to become aware of his present is to expect nothing any longer. If there are landscapes which are states of the soul, they are the most vulgar. Through this landscape I followed something which was not mine, but its, like a taste of death we had in common. Between these columns with their now oblique shadows, anxieties came to rest like wounded birds. And in their place, this arid lucidity. As the day advanced and the noises and the lights were snuffed out under the ashes descending from the sky, abandoned by my self, I felt defenceless against the slow forces within me which said no.

Few people understand that there is a rejection which has nothing in common with renunciation. What does it mean here, the word "future"? What can the "progress" of the heart mean? If I obstinately refuse all the "laters" of the world it is because it is a question also of not renouncing my present riches. It does not please me to believe that death opens on another life. For me, it is a door that closes. I do not say it is a threshold that must be crossed, but rather that it is a horrible and filthy misfortune. Everything that men propose to me is an attempt to rid man of the weight of his own life. And before the heavy flight of the great birds in the sky of Djemila it is exactly a certain weight of life that I ask for and obtain. To be wholly in this passive passion—the rest no longer concerns me. I have too much youth in me to be able to speak of death. But it seems to me that if I had to, it is here that I would find the exact word to express, between horror and silence, the conscious certainty of a death without hope.

ONE lives with a few familiar ideas. Two or three. In one's chance encounters with men and worlds, one polishes these ideas, one transforms them. It takes ten years to have an idea really one's own—about which one can talk. Naturally, it is a little discouraging. But only that way does a man gain intimacy with the beauty of the world. Until then, he saw it bluntly, face to face. Now it is necessary for him to take a step sideways to look at its profile. A young man sees the world face to face. He has not had time to polish the idea of death or nothingness of which, however, he has digested the horror. That is what youth should be, this hard confrontation with death, this physical fear of the animal that loves the sun. Contrary to what is said, in this respect, at least, youth has no illusions. It has had neither the time nor the piety to construct any. And, I do not know why, before this furrowed landscape, before this solemn, mournful outcry of stone, Djemila, inhuman in the setting sun, before this death of colours and hope, I was sure that at the end of their lives men worthy of the name should find this confrontation again, deny the few ideas which were theirs and recover the innocence and the truth that shines in the faces of the men of ancient times before their destiny. They regain their youth, but it is by embracing death. Nothing is more contemptible in this respect than sickness. It is a remedy against death. It prepares for it. It creates an apprenticeship of which the first stage is tenderness for oneself. It supports man in the great effort he makes to escape from the certainty of utter death. But Djemila . . . . and then I feel that the true, the only progress of civilisation, that to which from time to time a man attaches himself, is in creating conscious deaths.

What always astonishes me, when we are so prompt to refinement on other subjects, is the poverty of our ideas about death. It is good or it is bad. I am afraid of it or I long for it (as they say). But this proves also that everything simple is beyond us. What is blue, and what can one say about blue? One has the same difficulty with death. About death and colours we cannot reason. And yet what is really important is this man before me, heavy as the earth, who

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prefigures my future. But can I truly think about it? I tell myself: I must die, but this means nothing, since I cannot make myself believe it and can only experience the death of others. I have seen people die, above all, I have seen dogs die: it was touching them that upset me. Then I think: flowers, smiles, the desire for women, and I understand that all my horror of death lies in my jealousy of life. I am jealous of those who will live and for whom flowers and the desire for women will have all their meaning of flesh and blood. I am envious, because I love life too much not to be an egoist. What does eternity matter to me? One may be lying in bed one day and hear: "You are strong and I owe it to you to be honest; I can tell you, you are going to die"—one may be there, with all one's life in one's hands, all one's fear in one's intestines, and an idiotic look on one's face. What does the rest matter?

Men die in spite of themselves, in spite of appearances. One says to them, "When you are well . . . ." and they die. I do not want any of that. For if there are days when nature lies, there are days when she tells the truth. Djemila speaks truly tonight, and with what sad and insistent beauty! For myself, here in the world, I do not want to lie nor to be lied to. I want to carry my lucidity to the end and look at my death with all the profusion of my jealousy and horror. It is in the measure that I separate myself from the world that I am afraid of death, in the measure that I attach myself to the fate of living men, instead of contemplating the enduring sky. To create conscious deaths is to diminish the distance which separates us from the world, and makes us enter without joy into the consummation of our lives, conscious of the exalting images of a world forever lost. And the sad song of the hills of Djemila drives deeper into my soul the bitterness of this lesson.

TOWARDS evening we climb the slopes which lead to the village and, retracing our footsteps, we listen to explanations—"Here is the pagan city, this quarter which rises out of the earth is that of the Christians. Later . . . ." Yes, it is true. Men and societies have followed each other here; conquerors have marked this countryside with their civilisation of subalterns. They had a mean and foolish conception of grandeur and measured that of their empire by the surface it covered. The miracle is that these ruins of their civilisation are the very negation of their ideal. For this skeleton city, seen from so high, in the descending evening with the white flight of pigeons around the arch of triumph, did not write on the sky the signs of conquest and ambition. The world always ends by vanquishing history. This great stone outcry that Djemila utters amid mountains, sky, and silence, I know its poetry well; lucidity, indifference, the true signs of despair or beauty. The heart contracts before this grandeur we are already leaving. Djemila remains behind us with the sad water of its sky, a bird song that comes from the other side of the plateau, the sudden, brief descent of goats on the sides of the hills and, in the relaxed and echoing twilight, the living features of a horned god on the pediment of an altar.

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No Cantatas for Stalin?

WHERE are the funeral cantatas for Stalin? Why has the task of lamenting his death been left, so far, almost exclusively to the solemn marches of Beethoven and Chopin? Why have the composers of the U.S.S.R.—the Great and Small Russians, the White Russians, the Uzbeks, the Ugro-Finns, the Armenians, the Georgians—failed to render their musical homage to Him who is no longer with us? After all, only about eight months ago these same composers were issuing a daily torrent of musical praise to Stalin the good, Stalin the far-seeing, Stalin the founder—according to his own announcement of 1937—of "the happy new life." It was neither Marx nor Engels nor Lenin, but always Stalin and only Stalin who was thus hymned in the inevitable major key of Soviet self-glorification.

It may be objected that Stalin has only been dead about seven months, and that one can hardly expect to see the fruits of composition in so short a time. This was presumably the point which the Russian composer, Kabalevsky, intended to convey in the interview he gave to the French press, when he said that the funeral cantatas were in course of preparation, and that they would not be ready until the autumn, when they will be performed in the House of Modern Music in Moscow. But this is not convincing. The present situation is in too marked a contrast with the staggering speed with which the unfortunates in the 1948 Zhdanovite campaign against "formalism" produced their works of penance and rehabilitation. Then, within three or four months the Soviet musical repertoire was flooded with brand-new music for films, new songs, new ballets, new symphonies, even new operas, all written in accordance with the pure principles of "socialist realism," all filled with perfect major chords, gloriously optimistic; one can roughly estimate the average time of composition as having been eight to twelve weeks. What has slowed down the pace? No, one can hardly be satisfied with Mr. Kabalevsky's statement. Instead, one is constrained to wonder whether the complete absence of funeral odes to Stalin, or at least the extraordinary delay in their composition, might not have some relation to the sudden infrequency with which his name is mentioned in the pages of *Pravda*. Or is it that Soviet composers have become so used to the musical language of joy, with its abundant major "intonations"—to use a term dear to Soviet musical theorists—that they experience some difficulty or disinclination in venturing upon the *stilisticheskaya pereustanovka* ("stylistic re-orientation") required for the composition of lamentations in minor keys? This last point is worth lingering over.

In "socialist realism," whose principles of musical composition stem from 19th century textbooks on harmony, there is only one harmonic style possible: that based on the conventional use of major and minor triads and their inversions. When, as is usually the case, a Soviet composer deals with "heroic socialist construction," his score is full of major triads. It is only on those infrequent occasions when his work describes the "abject sadness" of pre-revolutionary life that minor triads prevail. The use of "free" dissonances, or rather of the dissonances "freed" by the work of such great composers of the 20th century as Debussy, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Berg, Bartók, and Hindemith, is strictly forbidden. Such music is condemned as "formalist," "decadent," and "bourgeois," and the penetration of the ideas of free dissonance into the "pure body" of Soviet music assumes in the eyes of official authority the character of an infiltration by "secret agents of imperialism." It is possible, therefore, that after Stalin's death the Soviet composers found it profitless to switch over, merely for the sake of a passing moment, to the pessimistic tones of music set in a minor key.

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For in the uplifting atmosphere of the Soviet Union this could only be a temporary deviation from the all-pervading major key of joy and praise. Perhaps they preferred to seek other subjects, which are no less portentous than the death of the Father of the Russian peoples, but which do not require the use of the unfamiliar minor key of sorrow and restraint.

But let us leave these conjectures, and await the fulfilment of Kabalevsky's promises. In the meantime, let us take a glance at the Soviet press to see what news of musical developments can be gleaned from its pages and what can be gathered from this and other sources as to the character of musical life in the Russia of 1953.

The outstanding feature, which is at once apparent, is the complete isolation of Soviet music from that of the West. Not a single work by Stravinsky, Berg, Schoenberg, Hindemith, and Webern—to name some of the leading exponents of contemporary music—is ever included in the repertoire of Soviet performers. Occasionally, a few of the works of Bartók, notably those based on folk music, are given a hearing; but this is in the main intended as a gesture of friendship to the sister republic of Hungary.

For other reasons, one or two symphonies of the great British composer, Vaughan Williams, and some of the works of Francis Poulenc are occasionally performed. Not that there is an affinity of style between these works and the officially authorised Soviet form of music; but the harmonious and melodic tones of Williams and Poulenc are appreciated as "easy to understand." Morover, in the case of Williams, most of his work is in the form of massive and eloquent symphonies, and this is a type of music which has always been much appreciated in Russia. A few other Western composers whose music is consonant in character sometimes appear on Soviet concert programmes, and at times one even meets American names.

But all this only represents a very small part of the Soviet repertoire and plays a minor role in Soviet musical life. The usual contemporary Soviet musical repertoire is laid down as though the Western world had ceased to exist at some moment during the period 1905–15. There has been some difficulty in fixing the exact date. During the time of Zhdanov's prominence, Wagner and Debussy were singled out as two of the main culprits responsible for Western decadence. Debussy has since been rehabilitated, at any rate as a composer of piano music, and even figures in the programmes of piano recitals at Soviet conservatories as "the inventor of a valuable style." In general those composers whose musical idiom is, in part at any rate, that of a past century, are for that reason regarded as "classics" and it was only the excess of Zhdanovite zeal in 1948–49 which caused them to be excluded from the Soviet repertoire.

The main stock-in-trade of Soviet musical performers are those same "great classics" of Russia and of Europe which are regularly performed in the Paris or London or New York musical season. There is a wealth of Chopin recitals, of annual performances of the same favourite symphonies, of repeated renderings of Schumann and Schubert *Lieder* cycles, of the same old violin recitals which start with "La Folia" and end with an encore of "The Bumble-Bee" by Rimsky-Korsakov. In addition, a number of secondary 19th century Russian composers, such as Taneyev and Kalinnikov, have been elevated to the rank of "classical" composers.

In Soviet Russia, the expression "classic" or "classical composer" does not relate to any feature of musical style or any historial epoch, but rather to all musical works or persons which have achieved an established reputation. Rachmaninov, for example (although he died in exile) has now become a "great Russian classic." He is one of the most popular composers in present-day Russia. His old-fashioned sentimentality, his orthodox harmonic style, are in tune with the taste of the new middle classes of Soviet society.

Another composer who has recently been elevated to the status of a "great Soviet classic" is Prokofiev, that unhappy and indomitable figure who was so often subjected during his lifetime to the stigma of "formalism." The official post-mortem on his life has begun to distinguish between two main periods in his creative work. The first, which comprises his writings after his return to Russia in 1933, is, with few exceptions, considered as a manifestation of the "great classical tradition of Russian music." But that part of his work

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which was composed abroad remains under the stigma of "formalism."

Thus in Soviet terminology there is no distinction of quality or relative importance within the broad field of musical composition which is covered by the term "classic." In this respect, the Soviet musical pantheon is absolutely democratic: the only indispensable qualifications for entrance are (1) the composer must be dead, and (2) he must on no account have composed any music that could be described as dissonant.

ALTHOUGH it occupies only a modest position in the repertoire of Soviet performers, the output of contemporary Russian composers is actually very substantial. There is an unceasing flow of symphonies, operas, ballets, quartets, sonatas, cantatas, romantic airs, and choral pieces. The dominant feature of this vast output is its oppressive uniformity: it is difficult to detect any significant difference between one piece and another. Nor is there any relief from the dominant tone of "uplift." The musical products of different parts of the Socialist Fatherland all sound as though they had been turned out by Ford or General Motors.

Anyone who spends a day reading musical scores from the U.S.S.R., with their uninterrupted uniformity, their unwavering adherence to the same official tone of laudatory optimism and the same style of superlative panegyric, will inevitably ask: how has it happened that a great nation, which up to twenty-five years ago was in the van of modern cultural movements, and which was one of the most lively centres of musical experiment during the early years of the revolution—and indeed as late as 1931–32—could have so rapidly and so completely relapsed into the musical idiom dictated by an orthodoxy? In the early 1920's, hardly any of the works of Schoenberg, Berg, Stravinsky, or Bartók were lacking from the repertoire of Moscow and Leningrad. As soon as they were written, these works were performed in Russia in crowded halls before an enthusiastic audience. What could have occurred since then?

The superficial answer, that subservience to orthodoxy in the sphere of musical composition is only a special case of the wider servitude to reactionary dictatorship which is characteristic of the Soviet régime, is quite simple. But there is another, more fundamental and complex reason for the return of Russian music to the conventional idiom, and for the abandonment of all innovation and experiment. This second underlying cause is rooted in the radical transformation which has taken place in the social structure of the Russian state since 1930. The essential feature of these changes, as they affect artistic creation, is the complete disappearance of the old social classes and particularly of the Russian intelligentsia which played a leading part in the earlier days of post-revolutionary Russia.

It was the intelligentsia which set the tone of the cultural life of the nation, because it alone could understand and encourage the work of the pioneers in the arts. With the disappearance of this class, the cultural life of the Soviet Union has become completely subject to the needs and tastes of the new classes which have emerged from the revolution, and particularly to those of the class of petty bureaucrats. In their attitude to the arts, as in their cultural background generally, this new class was inevitably on a very different plane from that of the "Westernised" intelligentsia with its intimate knowledge of all the latest artistic and intellectual developments.

Furthermore, it has to be remembered that the Russian artist has always, rightly or wrongly, regarded his work as being in the nature of a social dedication, and that this view prevails quite apart from the teachings of Marxism. The Russian artist feels that he is entrusted with a sacred duty to the community, which he must discharge to the best of his ability. Thus, one can well understand that the Russian composers turned away from the experimental phase of music which had prevailed in the 1920's, when they saw that there was no longer any public for such music, and that by pursuing this line they would be creating a barrier between themselves and the mass of opinion as it had developed in the new social structure—a barrier which has in fact emerged in similar circumstances in the West. It was not unnatural that they should have preferred to place themselves in the service of the new social classes whose supremacy was established during the 1930's. One can distinguish this line of development as something quite distinct from the external pressures to which they were subjected by the party leaders, whose outlook was, in artistic matters, strictly

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representative of the views of the new social classes.

But at the present time, several months after the death of Stalin, of which the repercussions are already becoming audible, one inevitably seeks some signs which might give reason for the hope that this period of narrow-minded censure, of isolation, and of subservience to orthodoxy, may be approaching its end. At first sight, it appears that everything is still as it was in the era of Stalin. Russian composers are still devoting themselves to the same "patriotic" subjects, the predominant form of harmony is still set in the all-pervading keys of "heroic major," the diverse patterns of folk-music still carry the imprint of officially inspired uniformity. Nevertheless, on closer inspection one can distinguish some faint indications of novel tendencies.

There is, first of all, the development of closer connections between the Soviet Union and its satellites, which has brought the Russian composers into contact with individuals and societies among whom the spirit of subservience to orthodoxy is not yet so deeply rooted as in the Soviet Union, and who still have some surviving memories of a period in which musical composition was free to develop according to the talents of composers. At the same time, there has been a gradual extension during the last two years in the range of musical repertoires in the Soviet Union, particularly in the field of Western classical music. For example, the works of Bach, which had in the past been only partially and imperfectly understood in Russia, were brought to the fore on the occasion of his bicentenary and have since enjoyed outstanding favour. Similarly, at the jubilee celebrations in honour of Monteverdi several of his pieces were performed which had previously been unknown, or at any rate never performed, in Russia. Again, Debussy, Ravel, da Falla and Richard Strauss have quite recently penetrated the iron curtain which marks the limit of the Soviet musical repertoire.

But it is in the pages of the musical and artistic journals that the most significant indications of a new atmosphere of thought are to be found. The musical monthly, *Sovietskaya Muzyka*, and the artistic weekly, *Sovietskoye Isskustvo*, have once again become readable. Only a couple of years ago the articles in *Sovietskaya Muzyka* were nothing but a sickening hotch-potch of orthodox discussions explaining and interpreting endlessly the "purifying" decrees of the central committee of the Communist Party which were issued in February 1948. Now this verbiage has almost entirely disappeared. Instead, there are a number of extremely interesting historical studies—though often expounding a questionable and tendentious theory of music—together with serious and apparently objective accounts of new works. There are also studies of important musical documents, such as the article which recently appeared on the subject of the unpublished manuscripts of Beethoven which have been found in Moscow. But the most striking and pleasing sign is the complete disappearance of portraits of Stalin (dressed in all sorts of costumes) and of all the other so-called "composers" such as Mao-tse-Tung, Zhdanov, Voroshilov and Beria (!), which used to appear periodically in the pages of *Sovietskaya Muzyka*. These have been replaced by portraits of real composers whose work is studied in the articles contained in the journals.

Admittedly, these are only very faint indications. One would have to have much stronger signs before one could confidently say that a new spirit is alive in Russia. But in the immense refrigerator in which Stalin had confined the life of the Russian people, these barely perceptible signs of life are significant. The pace of underlying social and cultural change in such a country as Russia is likely to be as gradual as that of geological transformations. But there is always the possibility of sudden acceleration. So long as the door of the refrigerator remains even slightly ajar, there will be an opportunity for some of the outer atmosphere to reach the frozen regions of the interior.

Nicolas Nabokov

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Opinions at Large

WHEN the 19th century American socialist, Edward Bellamy, came to consider how an economy producing for use, not for profit, was to know what people wanted, he was on the verge of inventing modern market research. For, though the immediate parents of our contemporary public opinion poll were various experiments conducted by business organisations and universities in the United States in the early 1930's, it is possible to find ancestors that go back fifty years or more. When men began to think seriously of applying scientific methods to social problems, and when the population of cities became so huge and various that it became difficult to ascertain easily what one's "neighbours" really thought, two essential preconditions of the public opinion poll were in existence. One other was necessary: the example of democratic voting, with its startling assumption that each vote, no matter who cast it, should have the same weight.

The public opinion poll has spread far beyond the United States, but to a great extent its boundaries are still those of effective democratic government. It is obvious that where a population does not dare express its opinions there is no way of studying public opinion without using *agents provocateurs*: totalitarian governments make "opinion" anyway and, aside from reading the police reports, find no need to study it. It is perhaps less clear that in places like Iraq or Ethiopia, where a large part of the population has not reached a certain stage of self-expression, it is pointless, if not impossible, to study "public opinion." For one thing, in such countries a census is either inaccurate or non-existent, so that one is hard put to it to know what kind of sample is needed. For another, people who are unaccustomed to expressing opinions are often just as unaccustomed to holding them. To be sure, one could conduct polls in such countries by limiting one's sample to the literate, the city-dwellers, the rich—who hold opinions—and this has been done. But the pollsters are dissatisfied when their net catches only a fraction of the population. Just as the spirit of democracy seems to insist that the vote should be given to all, so the spirit of public opinion polling seems to demand that a voice should be given to all. Indeed, much of the experimental work in polling has been aimed at getting a sufficient number of the poor and lowly into the sample, for the interviewers inevitably find it pleasanter and easier to approach, and get opinions from, middle-class people.

In short, it appears that highly developed democracy and public opinion polling are closely related, and that the example and practice of the first gives rise to the second. One citizen, one vote, easily suggests one answerer, one opinion; and just as votes are added, so are opinions. The relation is, indeed, so close that the mechanics of the opinion poll in different countries will serve as a crude measure of the perfection of its democracy. It is revealing that no public opinion poll operates in South Africa: what is one to do with the Indians, the Coloured, the Natives? How is one to add Afrikaner to English opinion? In the United States, it is equally revealing to find that the Gallup poll for many years excluded Southern Negroes from its polls on national elections—too few of them voted to affect the outcome. More recently, this single limitation on the Gallup sample has been eliminated.

THIS dependence of a proper opinion poll upon a properly functioning democracy explains the self-imposed limitations of an otherwise full report, recently published, on the way nations view one another, a subject on which we have had a great deal of informed and uninformed speculation in recent years. *How*

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Nations See each Other, by William Buchanan and Hadley Cantril (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press), is one of the fruits of the so-called "Tensions Project" of UNESCO: a series of investigations into "Tensions Affecting International Understanding." For the purpose of this study, a single questionnaire was drawn up and administered at approximately the same time, in the middle of 1948, to samples of about 1,000 people each in Australia, Britain (it is not clear whether the United Kingdom or a smaller area is intended by this term), France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States. The same questionnaire was also distributed to a sample of about 3,400 in the British Zone of Germany, 600 in West Berlin, and, at the end of the year, 1,000 in Mexico—but this last sample was drawn only from cities of 10,000 people or more, a tacit admission of the impossibility of reaching a true cross-section of the entire Mexican population, which largely consists of Indians who do not speak Spanish, and peasants who are illiterate.

One of the most interesting questions in the survey is designed to get a thumb-nail sketch of the social topography of each country. It reads: "If you were asked to use a name for your social class, would you say you belonged to the middle-class, the working-class, or the upper-class?" Like so many other questions used in public opinion polling, this one has a history which needs to be known, before one can appreciate the results. The question was first asked in the United States, in a slightly different form, in 1939. People were asked to identify themselves as upper-class, middle-class, or lower-class, and the vast majority placed themselves in the middle-class. This finding became almost a complete ideology in itself: one heard everywhere that America was a middle-class country, that the workers did not think they were different from the middle-classes, and so on. All this may well be true. However, when in 1945 a social scientist at Princeton University thought of re-asking the question, but this time replacing "lower-class" with "working-class," it turned out that a full half of the American population placed itself in the working-class. It seemed that the American worker was quite aware that he was a worker, but was anxious not to consider himself "lower" in any way!

It was on the basis of this history that the sequence of "middle-class, working-class, upper-class" was used in the UNESCO international survey, and translated into the nearest possible French, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, and Norwegian equivalents. The results give us a picture of the class structure in each country as viewed by people themselves, and the idea that the American view is exceptional is now quite shattered. In almost every country, about half the population consider itself middle-class; about half, working-class; and a few odd per cent, upper-class. Italy is, strangely enough, the most "middle-class" country—that is, 54% of the population so consider itself. Germany follows close behind, with 52%. The United States is quite far down, with only 42% of the population calling itself middle-class. At the bottom are Britain and the Netherlands, with only about a third of the population calling itself middle-class. The working-class figures correspond to these, with Britain and the Netherlands having the highest proportion placing themselves in the working-class—60%—and Germany and Italy the lowest, 41% and 42% respectively. When we come to the upper-class, we find that France has the highest proportion willing to give itself this label, 6% (but perhaps this is because the French term, *aisée*, is unique in its kind in having no connotation of "upper"), and Norway the smallest, 1%. It is also interesting to note that Norway has a remarkably high proportion unable to give any self-designation by class: 11%.

WHAT is most interesting in these figures is the extent to which the social structure as it exists in the minds of all these peoples is very much the same. All, with the exception of England and the Netherlands, are roughly divided into two, those who consider themselves middle-class and those who consider themselves workers. The higher proportion of Britons and Netherlanders considering themselves workers is baffling, though there is no lack of plausible explanations for this—as for any other—statistic. In Norway, the high proportion who are unable to say what class they belong to reflects the marked absence of felt social differences: the interviewers reported considerable difficulty in getting people in Norway even to understand the question.

We also find a structure of opinion common to all these peoples in the answers to a pair of

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questions intended to measure the intensity of class, as against national, sentiment. One question was whether the person felt he had anything in common with people of his own class abroad; the other, whether he felt that he had anything in common with his compatriots of another class. The answers to this pair of questions will be as disappointing to those who still look for international working-class consciousness to play a significant role in history, as to those who feel that the nation is a mystic body of which one and all are parts. In every country but one (France), more middle-class than working-class people felt something in common with their counterparts abroad. And the answers to the second question are divided by class in much the same proportion! What we seem to find, in other words, is that greater wealth, more education, a greater feeling of security, all permit the middle-class in every country the luxury of feeling closer to other classes, whether at home or abroad.

A number of questions were included in the survey on how people felt about their personal economic security—whether they had thought at the end of the war that things would be better or worse than they are now, whether they felt secure enough to plan ahead, whether they were satisfied with the way they were getting on, and so forth. From all these questions a single index of personal security was calculated. Australia has the highest "security index," France the lowest. It is surprising to find that the United States, Norway, and Mexico are bunched together behind Australia —which should perhaps lead us to reflect on the perils of statistics, rather than on the high economic estate of Mexico.

A MORE revealing measure of a people's satisfaction with its condition is in the answer to a question which asks, "Which country in the world gives you the best opportunity of leading the kind of life you would like to lead?" While 96% of the Americans answered the United States, only 30% of the Germans, 35% of the Italians, 43% of the French, 50% of the Norwegians, and 51% of the British chose their native lands. Only the Australians approached American unanimity in self-satisfaction, with 83% choosing Australia. One still sees in the answers to this question the influence of that great century—already gone and past these three decades—when thirty-five million Europeans emigrated to America. For one-third to one-fifth of the populations of Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and Mexico assert that the United States is the country which would give them most opportunity.

This backlog of goodwill produced by a century of free immigration is even more in evidence when we come to the heart of this study, the questions asking respondents to name the foreign people towards whom they felt most friendly, and the one towards whom they felt least friendly. Restrictive immigration laws may be doing much today to destroy the world image of the U.S. as a nation that welcomes strangers and assists the unfortunate, yet this image still preserves much of its old power. In every nation but one, more people said they felt friendlier to the Americans than to any other nation. The proportions ranged from a high of 61% in Australia to a low of 22% in Norway, but everywhere the United States heads the list—with the single exception of France, where 18% of the population chose Switzerland and 17% the United States. On the other hand, in every country but one, Russia was chosen more than any other nation as the one towards which people feel least friendly. The proportions naming Russia range from 51% in the United States and 50% in Germany to 24% in Mexico. Again, France is the sole exception—there Germany edges out Russia, 34% to 32%.

As we look into these figures more closely, we can see two quite different currents of feeling at war with one another. Two images of America seem to be reflected in these figures—an older one, derived from historic memory, of America as the land of refuge and opportunity; and a newer one, derived from ideological prepossession, of America as the supporter of capitalism and the opponent of the working classes. The first image inclines the poorer classes to show a greater liking for America than do the upper; the second image inclines the upper classes to like America more than do the poorer. In France, which has never supplied many immigrants for any country, and which knows least of America in its first role, ideology alone dictates opinion with the result that, while 34% of the most prosperous class declared they felt very friendly towards the United States, only 11% of the least prosperous class did the same. But in every other

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country, the earlier image of America, stemming from the direct experience of millions, modifies the later image known largely through ideological warfare. Indeed, in Britain, Norway, and Germany, it was found that the less prosperous classes actually thought better of America than did the more prosperous. And in the remaining countries there was not much difference between the rich and the poor. Even in Italy, where the Communist party is quite as strong as in France, experience tempers ideology considerably, and no less than 50% of the working class chose America as the country to which they felt most friendly.

When we come to attitudes towards Russia, ideology prevails untempered by experience. In every country but one, the workers were more friendly towards Russia than were the middle class. The exception is Germany, which has had direct experience of Russia: there the workers were as hostile towards Russia as were the upper and the middle classes. Only one country has a segment of its population whose members actually believe they would have more opportunity in Russia than in America. And that, of course, is France. In answer to the question: which country would give them the best chance of leading the kind of life they would like to lead, 10% of the very poor said Russia, 8% said the United States.

THE problem of what attitude one is to take toward such findings will agitate many people. There are those who assert that only in such figures can we discover what people really think (despite the fact that statistics are so notoriously treacherous that there is always plenty of room for argument over what a percentage means). Such embattled defenders of the opinion poll will dismiss the judgement of an informed observer or a journalist as a mere guess. On the other hand, historians and journalists are inclined to deny that the polls can tell them anything; for how can the mere mechanical application of a method come out with the truth? Is it possible to take a more balanced attitude towards poll results? Behind each percentage, one can see some one to three thousand individuals, housewives, workers, businessmen, people sitting in parks (these are great favourites of interviewers), approached by a hundred proper young men and women to be asked questions. What we get is a kind of evidence as to the state of public opinion—evidence different from what we obtain by reading the editorial columns in the newspapers, or interviewing political leaders, but one which, added to everything else we have, tells us something more about what people think than we would otherwise know.

The adding of new evidence tends rather to complicate problems than to solve them. Still—might not this be a virtue? Is there not something to be said for whatever moves controversy beyond the customary simplicities and generalities?

Nathan Glazer

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Men of Science—and Conscience

PLATO said: knowledge is virtue. Bacon said: knowledge is power. The "is" in each of these propositions, of course, means "ought to be." Plato knew very well that knowledge could be power, but he thought this a dangerous prospect: nothing less than a temptation to the wicked, in fact—the very proof of their wickedness lying in their lust to use knowledge instead of simply contemplating it. Bacon, on his part, with two millennia of Platonism behind him, did not have to be told that knowledge could be virtue, the extinction of desire in the vision of natural truth. But he decided against virtue and in favour of happiness: natural truth should yield to human desires, not vice versa. Thus, from the adoration of nature, man passed on to its conquest. If the adventure has ended up with our not being very happy, we can take some consolation in the fact that the Greeks weren't very virtuous, either.

One noteworthy result of this transformation of man's ideals has been the reversal in the notion of "freedom of science." The Greek scientist was free when he sat quite still and thought; had he been pushed into a laboratory or had he ever been obliged to publish his thoughts, he would have felt himself in slavery. With the modern scientist, the situation is obviously different, to an extent that needs no elaboration. Which would seem to imply at least that the idea of freedom is capable of embracing quite different meanings.

THIS implication confronted the 120 eminent scientists and scholars—among them Arthur Compton, James Franck, Lise Meitner, Max von Laue, Michael Polanyi, Sidney Hook, Joseph Pieper, Eugene Rabinovitch, John R. Baker, Cyril Darlington, and others—from 19 countries who, at the joint invitation of the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the University of Hamburg, assembled in Hamburg at the end of last July to look into the matter of "Science and Freedom." It was a surprising demonstration of *engagement* on the part of a scientific community that too often scorns to bother with such imprecise concepts as freedom. At Hamburg they worried the idea from all sides, very much aware that scientific freedom, in the modern sense, was not something to be taken for granted. It had been won long ago, by hope; it could now be lost, by despair; its case had been reopened and had to be pleaded. Nor was the jury so well disposed as once it had been. The city of Hamburg put out flags to welcome its visitors, but also eyed them as if they might at any moment walk across the surface of the Alster. The relation of the modern public to science—as Denis de Rougemont pointed out in his opening address—is in any case ambivalent, with science presenting itself as an irritating paradox: highly systematic yet always incomplete; compelling of belief yet upsetting of beliefs; certain in its conclusions yet sceptical in its method. The citizens of Hamburg had, in addition, more tangible grounds for ambivalence, best summed up by a taxi-driver who, clearly flattered at the chance of guiding a *Nobelpreisträger* through the city, smugly recounted the marvels of reconstruction which had almost entirely restored Hamburg to its pre-war self (patinated roofs and all!), while confessing that the transportation of such a customer tempted him to redress some painful war memories with reckless driving—"You wouldn't be missed, not by the rest of us!"

IT turned out—to no one's astonishment, it should be stated—that it was impossible, in the four days the conference lasted, to compose an adequate brief for scientific freedom. There were simply too many lawyers for the defence. Metaphysician and pragmatist, theologian and positivist—all could plead effectively, but

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obviously not at the same time. Still, everyone was pleased that so many persuasive arguments were forthcoming. An old cause does not necessarily need new arguments—especially if it is under attack by even older ones! Perhaps it needs only a bit of good luck, a shift in the trend of events, a slight movement of the *Zeitgeist*, for self-confidence to be restored.

There was no such conflict of counsel when it came to the freedom, not of science, but of scientists. This problem is simplified by the fact that, while a Platonic theory may challenge a Baconian one, there are no Platonic scientists in our day and age. All the real live scientists happen to be Baconian. These men want to follow their own lines of research, publish their findings, discuss freely with their colleagues, including those in other countries. If they live behind the Iron Curtain, they can do none of these things—for, while the Communists agree that knowledge is power, they are persuaded that they are already in essential possession of both, and that the duty of scientists is merely to make this possession more secure. Therefore, when the conference sent a message to the scientists of the U.S.S.R., looking forward to the day when they could sit down as "free men" at such a meeting as this, it was not inhibited by philosophical quibbles.

Similarly, the sessions devoted to the fate of Soviet science were far more animated than those devoted to freedom-in-general. In a way, this was unexpected. Usually, this subject is cradled in clouds of boredom. One can even say that the ability to make atrocities boring is totalitarianism's most insidious weapon. These atrocities appear so hopeless, so irremediable that the living victims themselves are regarded as being, in a sense, already dead—at most, little more than posthumous emanations. Consequently, there is almost always an artificial fervour, a contrived intensity, in the protest. In Hamburg, the bonds that link the scientific fraternity all over the world were able to excite an emotion that the plain bonds of humanity are too often impotent to provoke. At one point, when a physicist who had lived in the Soviet Union described how Soviet scientists cheat their tormentors by presenting last year's work as next year's plan, his staid audience could not repress a murmur of delight.

KNOWLEDGE is power. But so is the state. The relation of these two powers to each other is so bedevilling that a history of Western civilisation could be written around the problem. According to one set of scholars, the reason why the wise men of Greece prized *theoria* and scorned *praxis* was their fear of the way that wicked governments would exploit practical learning. Other scholars dispute this interpretation; indeed, they make up a majority of the profession. But one felt that an uncommonly large proportion of the scientists at Hamburg were ready to lend an ear to the minority. They were frightened of the state—even of a good one.

In most of the countries of the world today more than half of the funds for basic scientific research are supplied by the state. This makes scientists nervous—more nervous, actually, than the facts of the case seem to warrant. On this side of the Iron Curtain, the government's paying the piper has not yet led to its calling the tune. Even in the United States, where it is the armed services themselves that give to the scientists the public's money, little has so far happened to cause any viewing-with-alarm. At the Institute for Nuclear Studies in Chicago, the conference learned, scientists were free to establish their own research programmes, publish their findings, talk about them to colleagues (or to anyone else they could buttonhole), and take visitors on tours of their laboratories. This is not the result of any selfless commitment to truth by admirals of the fleet or generals of the air force, but rather of the law of supply and demand. The number of first-rate brains in any particular field being few, and the demand exceeding the supply (with the universities and private industries competing with government), the scientists are in a strong bargaining position. So it is that, in the United States, the entire declassification procedure, by which work of potential military value is sifted and eventually tossed into the open, was devised by the scientists themselves.

However, even the law of supply and demand can be abrogated in the interest of some higher law—"Aryanism," for example, or dialectical materialism. Governments and social orders have a habit of changing, in this century usually for the worse. And what could scientists do about it? How could they make certain that their work—if not themselves—would not in the future be made to serve strange masters and odious ends? The scientists at Hamburg were careful to affirm the dominion of conscience

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and morality over the scientific endeavour. But the constitution of this dominion was left vague. Some felt that it required political activity by the scientist; but no one seriously believed that scientists in politics could do what politicians in politics could not. Others called for a critical detachment from political passions; but they could not explain how this would affect political events for the better. In the end, the conference took refuge in an "enlightened public opinion," and one famous pragmatist experienced a slight Greek deviation when, in paying tribute to Mayor Ernst Reuter of Berlin (who turned out to be a former student of the great neo-Kantian, Hermann Cohen), he looked forward to the day when philosophers would be mayors.

Above all, what this conference made clear was the impossibility of solving the major practical issues plaguing modern science (the metaphysical ones could be assumed to be eternal, anyway) while the world of politics remained half-slave, half-free. It is all well and good for conscientious scientists to worry about the possible misuse of the power they have conjured up. But as long as one of the world's great empires is obviously intent upon misusing it, there is nothing left to do but conjure up more power, and still more, in the hope of frustrating this intention—but also in the knowledge that this "more" would soon be the common property of friend and enemy, and that they would have to renew their efforts without cease. The labour of Sisyphus—and so Baconian meets Greek, in tragedy. As one speaker put it: "Try as we may to follow other paths, we dare not stay our hands from the forging of weapons ideally adapted to our own destruction."

One could dream, however: and scientists do, like the rest of us. They dream, in the words that an American atom physicist uttered at Hamburg, of a new Guy Fawkes day, "when men in unfamiliar costumes, carrying stylised and decorated boxes which symbolise Geiger counters, pretend to look under factories for atom bombs, and children dance in the street for joy, and nobody but wizened old university professors know how the custom originated in the barbaric past. . . ."

Under the impact of these words, the city of Hamburg was transformed for a moment into a magic mountain. Then, as the scientists prepared to leave, pleasantly flushed with the vigour of discussion, flattered at the genial hospitality which the city had extended to them, praising the skill and sobriety with which the conference had been organised—then they noticed that the flags were at half-mast: it was the tenth anniversary of the disastrous Allied bombing of Hamburg. And the coarse light of day rose to blur the dream; but not, surely, to dispel it.

Irving Kristol

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BOOKS

AMERICAN DICTION *v.* AMERICAN POETRY

In his preface to *American into English*,* Mr. Carey relates how for the past seven years he has been mainly occupied with correcting proofs of some hundreds of books, many of them American. Here he has collected and analysed examples of current American "parlance" (he does not write "usage") which would have to be altered in order not to look strange in English. Mr. Carey avoids slang and "sheer journalese." He selects that which he considers to have "become a part of normal American parlance." Anyone who reads a good many American books will agree that his examples are well chosen.

Yet one would expect "normal American parlance" to have entered into modern American poetry. So, after reading Mr. Carey, it was with curiosity that I turned to the *Selected Poems* of Wallace Stevens.† Stevens is certainly, as his publishers say, "accounted an elder laureate," but all the same he is a poet whom most English critics would consider American to the point where his imagination even baffles the English reader. Yet whatever the grounds of this American quality may be, they are certainly not "American parlance." In fact, Mr. Stevens, like Mr. Allen Tate, Mr. Robert Lowell and Mr. Randall Jarrell—three of the most distinguished living American poets—manages to be very American whilst eschewing "American parlance."

In fact, as regards diction, Mr. Wallace Stevens has far more in common with a recently published and most promising English poet—Miss Elizabeth Jennings‡—than with the examples of dropped conjunctions, added prepositions, and other features which strike English eyes as odd, and which Mr. Carey cites.

Here is an example of Mr. Stevens' diction in one of his more recent poems, "It Must be Abstract":

> Begin, ephebe, by perceiving the idea
> Of this invention, this invented world,
> The inconceivable idea of the sun.
>
> You must become an ignorant man again
> And see the sun again with an ignorant eye
> And see it clearly in the idea of it.
>
> Never suppose an inventing mind as source
> Of this idea nor for that mind compose
> A voluminous master folded in his fire.
>
> How clean the sun when seen in its idea,
> Washed in the remotest cleanliness of a heaven
> That has expelled us and our images.

and here are some lines from Miss Jennings' "Afternoon in Florence":

> Light detains no prisoner here at all
> In brick or stone but sends a freedom out
> Extends a shadow like a deeper thought,
> Makes churches move, once still,
> Rocking in light as music rocks the bell.
>
> So eyes make room for light and minds make room
> For image of the city tangible.
> We look down on the city and a dream
> Opens to wakefulness, and waking on
> This peace perpetuates this afternoon.

The difference here is certainly not of American from English parlance. In fact the main difference between Miss Jennings' and Mr. Stevens' idiom is one of approach. Mr. Stevens fills in an abstraction with particulars (the empty idea with the plenitude of the sun) whereas Miss Jennings draws abstractions out of the particular afternoon in Florence.

* *American into English*. By G. V. Carey. Heinemann. 6s.

† *Selected Poems*. By Wallace Stevens. Faber. 12s. 6d.

‡ *Poems*. By Elizabeth Jennings. Fantasy. 5s.

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It would seem then that "American parlance" is a prose affair, and does not concern poetry. Since it is not slang or journalese we are dealing with, this is curious if true.

THE two, seemingly contradictory, characteristic tendencies of contemporary American prose, which distinguish it from English, are adding prepositions and compressing and simplifying the declension of verbs. Where an Englishman would say "to visit," Americans say "to visit with"; and where Englishmen rest, Americans "get rested up." On the other hand, Americans tend to use the aorist of verbs where the English define action with perfect and pluperfect. American: "I just got here." English: "I have just got here." American: "I already read it." English: "I have already read it." Etc.

The general American tendency is to emphasise the mechanics of actions. The extra or the different preposition has the kind of accuracy which tends to underline how something functions. "Ten minutes *of* eleven" gives more idea of a clock hand moving towards the figure 11 than does "ten minutes to eleven"—or so it seems to me (though unfamiliarity often lends force to a phrase). Anyway, the American use of an adverb like "presently" shows a consciousness of the presentness of "presently" which English quite lacks. The English say: "I'll see you presently," by which we mean: "I'll see you in the immediate future." American students say: "I'm presently auditing your course in group psychiatry." By which they mean "at present I am occupied in. . . ."

MR. CAREY quite rightly avoids discussing journalese and slang, as he wishes to restrict his examples to those which are so generally accepted as to be in some way "correct." However, journalism and slang are far more powerful influences in the American language than they are in English, where they tend to be altogether isolated from what is generally accepted. The journalistic and the slang in American are simply extreme instances of the tendency to compress, to emphasise, and to pay attention to the mechanism which is supposed to lie behind the objects of language. Almost any passage chosen from *Time* will illustrate this:

"Sounding more chipper than usual, New York's ex-mayor William O'Dwyer threw an office-warming cocktail party in the Mexico City penthouse suite of O'Dwyer, Bernstien & Correa. . . ."

"Office-warming cocktail party" suggests compressed background drama. It is a use of language with which Shakespeare quite often peps up narratives of background action told by bearded lords in his historical plays.

Time has, surely, invented an idiom which represents the fact that the situation of every American and the situation of the whole American nation is dramatic. Americans are conscious of acting on a stage which is the whole United States, while as a nation they also visualise themselves in an essentially dramatic relation to other nations. A country in which, if you can fail in some place, you can get away somewhere else and start again so easily; in which "every office boy may become a millionaire"; and which, on the international scene, presents every American tourist, and the whole nation itself, as a Daisy Miller, is bound to be a kind of stage. The movies, of course, like the radio, television, and the newspapers, exacerbate the consciousness of all this, but they would seem as uncalled-for as American newspaper manners would in the English press, if they were not expressions of a state of affairs which is American life—and not just *Life*.

Far and away the most effective American slang is that which expresses the idea of someone who is a bad actor. "Phoney" and "corny," for example, are much more than slang. They are concepts, categories for criticising a whole school of bad "lifemanship." A friend once described a young American writer to me as a "starry-eyed opportunist." The immense vigour and the funniness of such a phrase is made possible largely by what it owes to the whole American scene. It might have been applied, I suppose, to many an English writer or university graduate, but it would not have been so funny if not made by an American about an American.

A VERY characteristic type of American anecdote begins something like this: "Here was I coming along this lane when I saw this cow." The English, beginning an anecdote of this kind, would feel some obligation to locate the lane and not to particularise the cow. "I was going down the lane near our place, when I saw a cow." The "here was I" beginning, which occurs so frequently in America, assumes that

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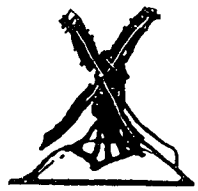
WILLIAM  HEINEMANN

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the speaker is conscious of a role, that the audience will understand this sympathetically, and that on this occasion the action in which the "I" is participating will appear funny. There is a less inhibited egotism than the English would permit themselves. We, if driven into seeming egotism when talking about ourselves, are inclined to shelter behind the impersonal "one." A good deal might also be written about the use of "this" in such a context. To an English ear it sounds slovenly, because "this lane" or "this cow" implies that something is already known about the lane or the cow: it is the lane or the cow you are now looking at, or of which we were talking previously. But to Americans, "this" implies the lane or cow I am only introducing for the purpose of this story, so, although there might be more to be said about either, the "this" represents the fact that I am not going to qualify them. The "this" is a partly ironic reference to a qualification which is absent. The cow and the lane are conjured up simply in their dramatic relation to the "I" of "here was I," and the "this" simply "stands in" and does service for something which is not stated.

Another influence which dramatises, in a mechanical way, American life, is the very general acceptance of the myth that we are all motivated by "psychology." "In judging your problem, maybe I don't see straight on account of problems of my own," is the kind of thing that is often said. The individual is not only conscious of his own "conflicts" but also of his relation to the group, and of the need always to be cooperative, integrated, etc. Conflict, cooperate, integrate, problem—all these suggest motives in a puppet play where the individual is tugged at by psychological forces.

THERE is, then, a kind of popular poetic-dramatic conception of life in the United States, which may seem crude, but which is certainly one of the things that makes America strangely theatrical. One can imagine an American poet writing a modern version of "All the world's a stage" in psycho-somatic terms; and to imagine this is to see something in common between the modern Americans and the English Elizabethans.

The Elizabethans, in certain moments, thought men were playthings of a machinery of passions and gods. However, their view of life was not mechanistic. If the Shakespearean hero gets above himself, then the gods knock him down, and he reflects that men are but flies played with by divine forces. He does not learn the lesson that in his relations he should be analysing the deistic mechanism all the time.

So perhaps the reason that the very exuberant "American parlance" hardly finds its way into American poetry (except when it is used ironically), is because the poets have good reason to be afraid of it. It is in part a mechanical heightening and sensationalising of the language (with a resulting loss of subtlety) and in part a conceptualising of it, by introducing ideas of psychological and ideological motivation into every human situation.

The poets are struggling for the concept, not of mechanical or conceptual motives, but of man, and hence, however vigorously they try to create a picture of America, they avoid the interesting and lively false poetry of journalism and radio. In fact, when we turn to the most consciously American poets—Robert Frost, Ezra Pound, Allen Tate, Wallace Stevens, Archibald MacLeish, Randall Jarrell, E. E. Cummings, Robert Lowell—it is with a sudden shock that we realise that, in spite of idiomatic idiosyncrasies, they all write in what is basically a noble and elevated style. After all, the greatest difficulty which confronts the English reader of these poets may be a certain grand coldness of language, which underlies even the "modernism" of E. E. Cummings.

SO what is peculiarly American about American poetry today? The very American thing is, I think, the poet's attitude to culture. Although he may think of himself as belonging—rather self-consciously—to a cultural tradition, part American, part European—the American poet still more thinks of himself as creating and demonstrating culture in each poem. Each poem is, as it were, a cultural act, a manifesto. This in itself is an attitude which demands an elevated style.

The English poet thinks of himself as existing within a cultural tradition. It may be a shallow one (how shallow it got with some of the Georgians!), it may be muddy and trickly, but he cannot get outside it and view it from there. The Americans are—to an extent which, though it may be small, is decisive—outside it. They *use* the tradition instead of being contained within it like flies in amber. That is the great contribution of the American criticism

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of the young Eliot and the young Pound to English poetry: they could look on the tradition as a thing to be used and not as a stream in which to swim or be drowned.

Eliot's use of quotation in his poetry illustrates what I mean. From his outside position, he dips his pen into the pot of Dante, or Verlaine, or Webster and introduces a line as colour. When Wallace Stevens entitles a poem *Cy Est Pourtraicte. Madame Ste Ursule, et Les Unze Mille Vierges*, the effect is not what it would be if, say, Belloc had done the same thing. He is painting his American portrait in medieval French colours.

Colour is, indeed, where Mr. Stevens is strongest. His poems are either paintings done with the cleanest primal colours ("Blue and yellow, sky and sun, belted / And knotted, sashed and seamed, half pales of red") or they produce the effect of *collages*, in which, among the colours, he can introduce ideas which have a stuck-on look. The cubist Picasso is what one thinks of. Europeans discover, not only America, but also an attitude towards oneself (an attitude which may teach them the secret of renewal) in the American poetry of which Wallace Stevens is one of the half-dozen great representatives.

Stephen Spender

COUNTERFEIT FREEDOM

WHEN Nicholas I died in 1855, the Russian intelligentsia hopefully welcomed his successor, Alexander II. Herzen and Ogaryov, who edited *Kolokol*, the Russian émigré paper in London, discussed the expected "revolution from above" by which the new Tsar would restore his country's liberties. "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" Herzen wrote, quoting Julian the Apostate, in a famous article in December, 1857, about which Lenin was to say that it was difficult to read even 50 years later without repugnance. One could quote not a few of Herzen's contemporaries, Chernishevski for instance, to the same effect. Their disillusionment was fairly rapid. In July, 1858, Herzen composed his *mea culpa*: "We confess our mistake. . . . This is the same régime, sweetened with molasses." And Ogaryov, in his new year's survey for 1860, commenting on Alexander's liberation of the peasants, wrote that on the first day everybody was enthusiastic and people were helped to a drink; "but as the day passes, people look around and realise that the wine is adulterated and the freedom counterfeit. And then begins a time of terrible silence when many faces whiten. . . ."

A new book by Mr. Isaac Deutscher* shows the author, vis-à-vis Malenkov, in a position very like that of Herzen in 1857. One could even argue that every new Russian ruler for the last two hundred years has been hailed in the beginning as a liberator, with the sole exception of Alexander III whose ascension to the throne was the result of the murder of his predecessor. Mr. Deutscher's book should be seen in this historical context: no "white faces" for the time being; but, on the contrary, high hopes, the beginning of "a new era," liberation and all that.

The main difference between Herzen and Mr. Deutscher is that the former was openly and unabashedly subjective and emotional in his approach, while the latter offers his views with qualifications seemingly suitable to a scientific analysis. Mr. Deutscher is not absolutely certain that a new "revolution from above" will initiate a process of democratic regeneration, but it is his surest bet by far. A relapse into Stalinism is thought by him to be unlikely, and the only other possibility he sees is a military dictatorship, "Bonapartism." But Mr. Deutscher does not think highly of the Soviet army leadership: it initiated the trend in favour of extreme Russian nationalism, and its influence was discernible in the vulgar campaign against "rootless cosmopolitans."

This last sweeping generalisation is in flat contradiction to what Mr. Deutscher wrote about the army in his biography of Stalin a few years ago, when he saw in its leadership one of the main ferments of liberalism, not unlike the Decembrists; but this is one of many contradictions in Mr. Deutscher's thinking which lack of space forbids me to comment upon. Nor would it be fair to criticise minor errors of facts (such as, for instance, misdating a session

* *Russia after Stalin*. By ISAAC DEUTSCHER. Hamish Hamilton. 10s. 6d.

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of the party's central committee) in a book which has apparently been written under pressure. Only two short remarks which do not concern Mr. Deutscher's main thesis must be made. One concerns his extensive quotations from *My Uncle, Josef Stalin*, by Budu Svanidse, a book of memoirs of so doubtful origin and value, to put it very mildly, that one would expect Mr. Deutscher to keep his distance from it. Even more surprising is his nonchalant attitude towards the secret rivalries in the Kremlin, "the many-sided plots in which now Beria was supposed to be trying to oust Malenkov and Molotov, etc." Mr. Deutscher has not much time for such idle speculations and he does not believe that the pattern of the struggle for power after Lenin's death will reproduce itself in 1953: so many things have changed almost beyond recognition—surely it is only the "phantoms of 1924" that seem to hover over Red Square. But six months after Stalin's death, the phantoms are overturning so many tables that one feels it necessary to ask Mr. Deutscher, a second Horatio: *How now, is not this something more than fantasy?*

Nobody could possibly predict who will prevail in the struggle for power in the Kremlin, and there would have been no quarrel with Mr. Deutscher if he had said as much. Instead, he did not expect a struggle for power at all, or did not think it of sufficient importance to mention as an extremely likely, if not inevitable, development. This is not mere accident but the logical result of his philosophy of history as expounded on two different occasions in his book: he relies on Plekhanov as far as the place of the individual in history is concerned, and endorses the tenets of historical materialism, not even in their more refined form.

MR. DEUTSCHER is not alone in hoping for a resurgence of democratic socialism in the Soviet Union; many millions of other people want it not less than he. But this does not entitle any one to present his wishes either as cold fact or as logical conclusions of scientific analysis. It certainly does not entitle Mr. Deutscher to do so, who has been so very hard at work to juxtapose his objective, dispassionate, balanced judgement to the "emotional anti-Soviet prejudices" of other writers. Frequently, Mr. Deutscher reveals a very high-handed attitude towards facts. Writing on the amnesty of March, 1953, he says:

"The decree left one point vague: It did not define who were the counter revolutionaries excluded from the pardon. All the same, the amnesty must have resulted in the closing down of many or most of the concentration camps. Among the inmates of those camps the majority were people sentenced to not more than five years; and in recent times very few seem to have been convicted for counter revolution."

Every single sentence in this paragraph is challengeable. There is nothing vague about "counter revolutionary activities"; it is defined in paragraph 58, 1–14 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. And if Mr. Deutscher argues that the amnesty "*must* have resulted" or that in "recent times very few *seem* to have been convicted," this is not objective and dispassionate research, but "Soviet studies" *à la* Ahmed Amba or Budu Svanidse or Alexander Werth.

BUT to return to Mr. Deutscher's main argument. The first part of Mr. Deutscher's book is, on the whole, an able apologia for Stalinism, with some important reservations. He believes that Stalinism has fulfilled an important historical function "driving the Soviet people to jump the chasm which separated the epoch of the wooden plow from that of the atomic pile." History, for Mr. Deutscher, is an extremely determined lady who knows exactly what she wants and who is no respecter of persons—not even of Lenin, who "died when history had overtaken him," or Stalin ("Stalinism has exhausted its historical function"). This is neo-mythology, of course, with history as one of the weird sisters. Mr. Deutscher is influenced more by Stalinism than he himself probably realises, and I mean Stalinism, not Marxism. He believes (as the Trotskyists did in the 1930's) that both economically and ideologically the Soviet régime is sound, and that what is needed is a "limited change" in the form of a revolution from above—a typical Stalinist concept. ("Only reform decreed from above can force a way out of the impasse into which Stalinism finally landed itself"—*only*!) In the jargon of *Voprosi Philosphii* this would read: In view of the fact that the contradictions in Soviet life are not fundamental, as in the capitalist countries, what is needed is reform from above, not revolution from below.

There can be no quarrel with Mr. Deutscher when he stresses the economic progress

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achieved in Russia in the last decades, or when he points out that, even in the eventuality of a radical change of the régime, the nationalisation of industry (and possibly even the collectivisation of agriculture) cannot be undone. But what connection, logical or historical, is there between economic development and the trend towards "democratic regeneration"? "The economic progress made during the Stalin era has at last brought within the reach of the people a measure of well-being which should make possible an orderly winding up of Stalinism and a gradual democratic evolution." It "should make possible," but it does not.

Mr. Deutscher believes, for one reason or another, that Russia may still be "mired up to her ankles or to her knees in the epoch of primitive magic, but she is not plunged in it up to her neck and ears as she was a quarter of a century ago." The exact opposite is true; the Russian worker and peasant were nearer to democracy and further away from magic in 1928 than they are in 1953. Political development under Stalin has put the clock back, not forward; economic development has not influenced this process.

Next to nothing is utterly impossible in history, and a new "revolution from above" is at least a theoretical possibility. It is only extremely unlikely, even more unlikely than a revolution from below, which Mr. Deutscher does not consider at all. But Mr. Deutscher is bound to describe the new régime as a reform movement even if most facts point to the contrary. "Never during the Stalin era was the political police charged with illegal extortion of evidence." Mr. Deutscher must know very well that there were such cases in January and February, 1939, but he does not mention them because they do not fit in with his thesis. He regards Malenkov as a representative of the younger generation, therefore freer to promote reform, and not one of Stalin's Old Guard who was prominently associated with the terror of previous years. But Mr. Deutscher undoubtedly knows that Malenkov was Yezhov's deputy and as such had a leading role in 1936–38, a role more prominent than all other living Politburo members. Here again, the facts do not fit Mr. Deutscher's theories, and have to be disregarded.

Time and again, some perfectly natural, logical event or trend, which in itself is neither

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good nor bad, neither progressive nor reactionary, is described by Mr. Deutscher as part of the "reform movement" *ad majorem Malenkovi gloriam*. He appears to have given little thought to the nature of politics in a totalitarian state, which he is inclined to regard as a malevolent and confusing invention of some American observers.

What Mr. Deutscher has to say in the very last chapters of his book is of almost incredible naïveté: "The prospect of a military dictatorship, while not altogether unreal is improbable. The Russian people would have to prove extremely immature to exchange the rule of the *nagan* [pistol] for the rule of the sword. . . . The nation has outgrown authoritarian tutelage." Why should the Soviet people be more mature in 1953 than in 1933? Well, says Mr. Deutscher, they produce six times as much coal and five times as much steel, and many millions have been taught to read and to write and to handle modern machinery. *O sancta simplicitas!* Measured by industrial development and output, had not the German people even more definitely outgrown authoritarian tutelage by 1932? The production of more coal, steel, and oil does not make any country automatically more mature and democratic.

And can people *outgrow* "authoritarian tutelage" (the euphemism Mr. Deutscher uses for the totalitarian state)? Why is the whole of human history one of class wars and revolutions (not only according to Mr. Deutscher) and now, all of a sudden, this is over for good: the totalitarian state, the most powerful in history, will wither away, and a peaceful transition to socialism will take place . . . ?

"'I can't believe that!' said Alice. 'Try again,' said the Queen, 'draw a long breath and shut your eyes.' Alice laughed. 'There's no use trying,' she said, 'one can't believe impossible things.' 'I daresay you haven't had much practice,' said the Queen."

Mark Alexander

THE POOR COUNTRIES

ANYONE who talks about economic improvement in the poor countries of the world finds himself, sooner or later, contemplating a vicious circle. There is nothing remarkable about this—the circle is there and it is notoriously vicious. For some two-thirds of the peoples of the world low productivity is a cause—really a counterpart—of low income. And because income is low, it follows that education is deficient, health is poor, capital formation is negligible, and the productivity of workers is also low and lacks any capacity for improvement.

Although all this is recognised, there has been much less recognition of the implicit agreement that exists on the proper point at which to break into the circle. Both in the free countries and the Communist world it is taken for granted that this chain, if it is to be broken at all, must be severed where capital formation enters the sequence of cause and consequence. The five-year-plans in the Soviet countries have, as everyone knows, been highly organised and ruthless efforts to force the pace of capital formation. The emphasis on the strategic significance of an infusion of capital has hardly been less in the non-Communist lands. There are differences of view on method, and perhaps also on the possible rate of change, but not on the importance of an increased supply of capital for inducing change. In the United States, during the first romantic discussion of Point Four, there were some who were persuaded that technical knowledge—that intangible but wonderful thing called American "know-how"—could somehow be made a substitute for capital in the poor countries. This pleasant and highly economical notion has lost much of its original support.

It is, of course, certain that no country—taking its population and natural endowment as given, as one normally must—can have a higher level of real income unless it also increases the quantity or quality of its plant, equipment, tools, public works, and the other aids to production that have customarily been aggregated under the term "capital." Whether, as is generally assumed, a direct effort to increase the stock of capital is always the best first step towards getting higher income, is a question that should, perhaps, be left somewhat more open than it is. The 19th century philosophers worried much more about the political and social climate for capital formation than they

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did about the fact itself. Were that environment satisfactory, the wealth of nations was assumed to increase automatically. One suspects that there are countries today where a traditional ruling class is so flatly inimical to progress that the first requirement for change is a revolution, hopefully under agreeable auspices. Public education, which evidently has been a factor in the striking advances of Mexico in recent times, could possibly be a decisive point of attack. (Many would have suggested it in the United States say a hundred years ago.) Conceivably there are countries where the control of yaws, syphilis, malaria, or hookworm is essential to any increase in productivity and where nothing good can happen first. I am persuaded that in the tropics the problem of health and the solution of certain technical problems of the use of resources, including the management of tropic soils, is of strategic importance.

Thus a single-minded preoccupation with capital, especially industrial capital, as the source of fundamental change could be unfortunate. Nevertheless, no one is likely soon to suggest that capital is unimportant. Whether as a primary cause of change or a derivative of other change, it is evident that there cannot be economic progress without capital formation. And there is also abundant evidence that, in a poor country, there are specific and formidable barriers to increases in the capital supply.

CONSIDERING the importance commonly attached to capital supply in the poor countries, there has been surprisingly little systematic discussion of the problem. The theory of capital and capital supply has reached an extraordinary state of sophistication in the advanced countries—in the hands of such scholars as Professor Frank H. Knight sophistication has even shown signs of graduating into mysticism—but this has all been theory for a country which has a goodly stock of capital to which marginal increments are being supplied, a highly organised monetary system, advanced financial institutions, and fully developed habits of saving and investment. As concerns the poor countries, the discussion has been of bits and pieces of the problem, and a systematic theory of capital formation in those areas has long been needed. Within the last few months this need has been admirably met by

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Professor Ragnar Nurkse* of Columbia University and no one can really be excused for talking about the problems of economic progress in the poor countries without having done his homework on this book.

With rare exceptions, capital for the underdeveloped countries has been viewed exclusively as a problem of supply. Here are vast needs for capital. But most of the people are poor and cannot save. The few rich don't. Hence no resources are liberated from current consumption to sustain those who are building equipment for future production.

Professor Nurkse begins with a much-needed examination of the demand for capital in the poor countries and comes quickly to the conclusion that the demand is likely to be as meagre as the supply of savings for investment. People are without shoes but the building of a shoe factory does not supply them with the income with which to buy footwear. Hence, investment in shoe plant and machinery would not be justified. It follows that there is no demand for capital for this industry. (One recalls that O. Henry's hero in *Cabbages and Kings*, the ingenious consul at Coralio, stirred up a phenomenal demand for shoes among the barefooted denizens of the Spanish Main by sowing cockleburs in the sand. He must have been favoured by a consuming population with some latent effective demand.) As with shoe factories, so with any other investment viewed in isolation. With no demand in all these individual cases, there is no demand for capital in the aggregate. Things would, of course, be radically different were investment going forward in a great many different lines at the same time. Then the workers on the roads, railways, dams, canning factories, and textile mills would have income with which to buy shoes. Investment in the shoe factory would pay off. But the individual entrepreneur or even the government development board cannot count on these companion changes unless they are deliberately contrived.

The meagre demand for capital is matched by an equally meagre supply. This, in the first instance, is the result of poverty—people do not save from income that does not provide them with enough to eat. But, in what is undoubtedly the most challenging contribution of the book, Professor Nurkse is led to doubt if an improvement in income will bring much increase in saving. When hunger is appeased, savings will not increase if another and higher living standard is known to people and is accepted by them as a norm. This is now the case. The whole world lives under the "demonstration effect" of American living standards; American amenities and gadgets have become the goal of people the world around. Indeed, with the aid of American advertising techniques, ideas on how to spend more money get around the world rather more expeditiously than ideas on how to produce more goods. Japan, in its great years of growth, managed to have an astonishingly high rate of capital formation by adopting Western techniques of production while her people remained insulated from Western living standards. Professor Nurkse doubts that there can ever be another Japan.

Thus he emerges from his diagnosis, not with a vicious circle, but a vicious equilibrium. In the poor country a small demand for capital is balanced by a small supply. New investment which might increase income is choked off by the lack of income. Should there be an increase in income, willy-nilly it would be consumed and thus do nothing to augment the supply of savings and the stock of capital goods. This is all-round triple-reinforced stagnation.

YET Professor Nurkse is not entirely pessimistic on the chances for breaking out of the box. It is one of the great virtues of a rounded system that remedies are directly related to the disorder. Although demand for capital by individual enterprises is slight, this, as noted, will not be the case if investment is proceeding on a sufficiently wide front so that outlay here is creating demand there, and vice versa. Accordingly a comprehensive investment programme will work and, indeed, it is essential. This means, however, that investment must be under state auspices in some fashion or other. It would be a most improbable accident were private enterprise to come along with the requisite volume of investment in the required number of places at the right time.

On the matter of supply, Professor Nurkse is equally dubious of the traditional reliance on voluntary savings. Savings must be forced. This, in principle, can be accomplished either by taxation or by the pressure on living standards of inflationary price increases result-

* *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*. By RAGNAR NURKSE. Basil Blackwell. 15s.

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ing from a budget deficit. Professor Nurkse makes a strong case for taxes. The investment plan would be financed by a budget surplus produced by taxation, which taxes, if the circle may be completed, would depress consumption and so free resources to sustain those who are working on the capital projects.

In response to the obvious query: How do you depress the consumption of people who aren't eating very well anyway? Professor Nurkse would point to the well-to-do minority which is consuming above subsistence and—this is more important—to the disguised unemployment which is a standard feature of the underdeveloped community. In these communities—this is even true of the Southern Appalachian region of the United States—men and women nominally engaged in farming could be withdrawn without any appreciable effect on output. The author would, in effect, use the food they now eat to no productive end, to nourish them while they built roads, irrigation works, industrial enterprises, and other additions to the stock of capital equipment. The disguised unemployed are the invisible margin available to the underdeveloped country for making capital.

THIS is not the whole story. Obviously in any land, in the straitened circumstances just described, loans and gifts from outside would come in handy. Professor Nurkse thinks them important although he believes that most capital formation must come from internal sources. However, the time has come for a comment on his main thesis.

He is undoubtedly right in drawing attention to the demand for capital—perhaps more precisely to the fact that capital formation involves a concept of critical mass if it is to be viable. The corollary, namely that the requisite investment effort can only be made under government auspices, also seems to me sound. In many if not most of the poor countries, the state is a feeble instrument. But it is also the only available instrument. When a country is stirred by the desire for economic improvement, the government cannot simply sit by and hope that private entrepreneurs will come along and take the initiative. It must act.

The issue is not one of planning *v.* no planning, but how planning can be accommodated to an inferior administrative apparatus. One of the most perverse facts of our time is that

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the governments which are most heavily committed by circumstances to socialist intervention are the least competent for the task. We badly need explicit consideration of the kinds of public sponsorship of investment which are appropriate to the limited administrative competence of the poor country. Perhaps something can be done by decentralising development along lines on which India is now experimenting. Perhaps something can also be done to farm out enterprises to private entrepreneurs, either domestic or imported. These are not matters of ideology; they concern intractable questions of management.

However, Professor Nurkse seems to me to go too far in his insistence that there must be a large amount of investment if given acts of investment are to find a use. There is a whole class of projects in the underdeveloped country that provide services at low cost which are now being consumed at high cost. In these cases there can be no shortage of demand. And, consequently, investment in roads, or in irrigation and reclamation to produce more food, may pay off where investment in shoe factories for a shoeless populace will not. People will simply be getting the transport or food, for which they are now paying heavily in physical effort or money, at lower real cost.

The notion that only a broad investment effort will pay off may be subject to another qualification. Just possibly there are types of investment which, although unrewarding in themselves, may be capable of catalysing a good deal of activity elsewhere. With the possible exception of El Salvador, every country that has come to Washington for developmental assistance in recent years appears to have broached the subject of a steel mill. Amid much shaking of learned heads, Chile, Brazil, and Colombia have set about building crude-steel capacity. Emissaries from any number of other countries have been told with great kindness that they must not be utter idiots.

The commonsense and good judgement of Washington in this matter seem flawless. Yet there never has been a country with enough industry to matter which did not have a domestic steel supply. Perhaps such an industry, aside from the considerable advantage of providing a local source of steel whenever shortages lead to allocations in the metropolitan countries, brings in train metallurgical lore and use which causes development in all sorts of unexpected places. I do not want to press this point unduly; these are matters on which one can easily become romantic or even mystical. Still, were I the enlightened and benevolent dictator of a sizeable country seeking development, I would buy my people a blast furnace.

FINALLY a word on capital supply. Professor Nurkse is surely right in believing that reliance on traditional voluntarism, even when abetted by epigrams from Benjamin Franklin at every village well, will not bring the necessary savings. Inflation, the most popular alternative in practise, has serious and perhaps even self-defeating defects. But to get savings through taxation and fiscal astringency is also an exceedingly formidable business. Where there are well-do-do or wealthy to be taxed, as in the Middle East, there is the inconvenient fact that these are also likely to be the government. Such governments have a strong disinclination to tax high incomes.

Even where political power rests on a wider base, as say in India, such a policy is difficult. The kind of taxes required—taxes sufficient to depress well-to-do consumption and force partially employed farm labour into the labour market—are Draconian. And the resulting budget surplus, the source of the investment funds, could also be used to alleviate hunger, disease, and general destitution. In this contest between an appalling present and a less appalling future, a responsive and responsible government is likely to end up concerning itself with the present. That it does not enforce the ruthless austerities of a five-year-plan may merely mean that the government is humane.

Professor Nurkse, I must emphasize, does not ignore these problems. He believes them to be grave. But were he to give them their full value he would, I think, lay greater stress than he does on outside aid. This, for an initial period at least, may be the only alternative to greater privation than a moderate government can enforce.

Marx argued that the capitalist countries would be impelled to unload their surplus of investment funds on the poor lands in order to insure their own economic survival. Marx was wrong—as the lack of enthusiasm for Point Four in Washington today demonstrates. If only he had been right!

J. K. Galbraith

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ASIAN NATIONALISM

MR. K. M. PANIKKAR is a distinguished writer, statesman, and diplomat. He is the author of several original historical works, was the first Ambassador of independent India to Communist China, and now represents his country in Egypt. His latest book* is an essay on the period of European domination in southern and eastern Asia, which began with the voyage of Vasco da Gama to India in 1498 and ended with the victory of the Chinese Communists in 1949. These four and a half centuries possess, in Mr. Panikkar's view, a basic unity that has been largely ignored. As he rightly points out, the voluminous literature on the history of Asia during this period consists almost entirely of studies of individual countries. He has set himself the task of restoring the larger perspective, in what he calls "perhaps the first attempt by an Asian student to see and understand European activities in Asia for 450 years."

Mr. Panikkar is painting on a vast canvas, and it is not surprising that the colours are more vivid in some parts than in others. His profound knowledge of India, both past and present, has been reinforced by a thorough study of China. His treatment of Japan relies to a far greater extent on the work of other scholars, and his references to South-East Asia are very thin, except where the interests of India or China are involved. Of the European nations it is, of course, the British whom he knows best. From an Indian nationalist the British reader will expect harsh words, but Mr. Panikkar gives credit where he thinks it is due: for the traditional adversary he shows respect, and at times affection. One also detects a certain admiration for the Portuguese pioneers, the first of the European invaders, whose contact with the author's first home, the coast of Malabar, formed the subject of his first considerable historical research. For the French and Dutch he shows no sympathy and little understanding. It would be flattering to British pride to regard this as proof of British superior virtue; it seems, however, more likely only that Mr. Panikkar has had little opportunity to acquaint himself with France or Holland. Of Russia it must be said, with regret, that Mr. Panikkar shows hardly any understanding or knowledge. He appears unfamiliar, not only with Russian sources, but with European secondary works on Russia. This, as will be argued later, is not a minor gap.

NATIONALISM, the author believes, is "the most significant development in Asian countries during the last hundred years of European contact." He disagrees with those European writers who claim that nationalism is an idea imported into Asia from the West. "In China, Japan and to a lesser extent in India, the sense of patriotism was strong and deeply imbedded in people . . . . The development of nationalism in Asia . . . . was a parallel growth to the same movement in Europe and arose out of similar circumstances, that is, resistance to foreign rule."

But nationalism, after all, is something distinct from patriotism. Patriotism is as old as the human race. Its object may be home, family, country, or dynasty. Nationalism speaks in the name of The Nation, an invention of the 18th century and the French Revolution, an invention detested and combatted by the monarchs and ruling classes of that time. In 19th century Europe, nationalism became indissolubly associated with the idea of popular sovereignty, with the idea that loyalty to the people came before loyalty to the ruler, and that the people were always noble and good. These were the ideas of Mazzini and the Irish patriots, who, as Mr. Panikkar rightly notes, influenced Asia as prophets of nationalism. Nationalism has gone a long way since then, and the people and those who speak in its name have revealed unsuspected features. But it was surely this nationalism, derived from Rousseau and his diverse intellectual progeny, which arrived, ready-made, in Asia, and gave direction to the discontent and the patriotism that had long been there.

Not only was nationalism imported from Europe, but those who propagated it were a European product, the special social category, so difficult to define yet so vitally important in

* *Asia and Western Dominance*. By K. M. PANIKKAR. George Allen and Unwin. 30s.

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the history of "underdeveloped countries," which first received a name in Russia, the first "underdeveloped country"—the *intelligentsia*. Of the general importance of European education in Asia, Mr. Panikkar is of course well aware. Through European schools on Asian soil, and by study in Europe and America, young Asians entered the cultural world of the 20th century. In this field perhaps more credit should have been given to the Christian missions, to which Mr. Panikkar devotes some of his most brilliant and tendentious chapters. But if educated Asians lived in the 20th century, their peoples lived far back in the Middle Ages. The contrasts between their own lives and the lives of the peasant masses, between the democratic ideas that they learned as students and the reality of the Asian villages, largely explain the frustration and radicalism of the Asian intelligentsia. Their position was similar to that of the Russian intelligentsia at the turn of the century, or of the Balkan intelligentsia in the 1920's. It has no real parallel in the history of Western Europe or North America. There too, of course, there has been mass poverty and social injustice in the 20th century. But whereas the British or American worker was merely much poorer than the lawyer or the teacher, in Asia the masses and the intellectuals belonged to different worlds and different centuries.

In Asia as in Eastern Europe, the radicalism of the intelligentsia took many different forms, determined mainly by the degree of political freedom, and the resilience of the intellectual tradition, of each country. As Mr. Panikkar shows, in one of the most interesting sections of his book, both Indian and Japanese thinkers, in different ways, were able to adapt their religious and cultural traditions to absorb certain Western ideas and to meet the European challenge. Of the two, the Japanese were more quickly and spectacularly successful, but it may be that in the long term the Indian achievement will prove the more solid. In China, on the other hand, the old values crumbled, and a vacuum was created, which, after a chaotic interval, was filled by Marxism.

The political conditions of the three countries were also quite different. In Japan the brilliant military and industrial successes of the Imperial régime enlisted the support of most of the educated class, while police measures kept the influence of social radicalism within narrow limits. Repression drove the Left into revolutionary action, but also made this action extremely ineffective. The revolutionary movement which had a substantial following in inter-war Japan was not "Left" but "Right"—a hotch-potch of religious traditions, anti-capitalist slogans, and militarism. It was MacArthur who first gave the Japanese political freedom, and the consequences of this experiment are not yet clear.

In China there has hardly ever been any freedom in the present century. It seems indeed doubtful whether any influential Chinese has thought in any but authoritarian terms. In India, under British supremacy, the rule of law and the liberty of the citizen were more than fictions. It is true that Indian nationalists were sometimes imprisoned, that troops sometimes fired on crowds, and that individuals were sometimes unjustly or even cruelly treated. It is understandable that the triumphant nationalist orators of today should seek to perpetuate the memory of their sufferings. Yet repressive actions by the British authorities in India were on a quite different scale, both in quantity and in quality, from those of the Imperial Japanese "Thought Police," the Chinese warlords, or Mao's Communists. This difference in kind Indian opinion will in time recognise. Mr. Panikkar, who speaks of the "imposing and truly magnificent legal structure" in British India, recognises it already. He also knows that Britain consented to Indian independence, not only because Indian nationalists were strong, but also because the British people did not wish to refuse to the Indians the democratic rights which were their own most treasured heritage and achievement. Democracy, of course, is never secure: it has to be defended and reconquered by each generation. But that its roots are stronger in India than in China or Japan is a source of some small pleasure to British minds.

In Japan, China, and India, then, the forces driving the intelligentsia to revolutionary thought or action were not equally strong. But in all three countries the gap between the centuries, between masses and intelligentsia, remains even today, though it is less wide in industrial Japan than in agrarian India and China. It is perhaps widest of all in South-East Asia. The frustrated revolutionary intelligentsia is no less important, as a social and

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political force, in independent Asia than it was in colonial Asia. It is, as it was in Russia and the Balkans, the main force on which the Communist conspirators can rely.

MR. PANIKKAR emphasises that at least since the mid-19th century the European Powers usually acted together against Asians, especially in China, and that this unity of Europe created the idea of the unity of Asia, of what he calls "Asianism." The unity of Europe was, of course, an optical illusion. The unity of Asia is also an optical illusion. It is not only that, as Mr. Panikkar partly admits, the Moslem, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian civilisations are as different from one another as any of them is from the Christian civilisations of Europe and America. It is also that the interests of the great Asian Powers have conflicted, do conflict, and are likely in the future to conflict. Mr. Panikkar does not profess the curious but fashionable doctrine of the "inverted colour bar," by which no one can be an imperialist whose skin is not white. But he does appear to underrate Asian imperialisms. He admits the imperialist record of Japan in China, even if he half dismisses it by insisting that it was copied from British methods of conquest in India. Of the Kashmir conflict, of the potentialities of *Auslandschinesentum* as a "fifth column" in South-East Asia,* and of the prospects of Burma between the Chinese and Indian colossi, he has nothing to say.

But it is in his references to Russia that the distortion of his perspective is most alarming. Apparently because Russia "is in Asia," Mr. Panikkar's "Asianism" causes him to slur over the record of Russian imperialism. He states that Russian expansion eastwards filled a vacuum, in much the same way as American expansion to the Pacific. This comparison is true only of Siberia. In the Caucasus and in Central Asia the Russian armies conquered ancient civilised states, often using barbarous cruelty. Nor is it true that Russia did not engage in religious proselytism. The Moslem Tatars of the Volga valley were cruelly persecuted until the end of the 18th century, and in the late 19th and early 20th centuries the same process was continued by less cruel but no less energetic methods.

From the mid-1890's Russian imperialism in China was comparable to that of all other European Powers except in its greed, which was greater. Sometimes it took advantage of the aggression of other Powers against China (in 1858 and 1895), sometimes it acted on its own (in 1900). If the other Powers bribed mandarins, the Russians bribed Li Hung-chang himself. If the other Powers built their own alien city on Chinese soil at Shanghai, the Russians built the Russian city of Harbin in the centre of Manchuria. Mr. Panikkar seems to know nothing of the organisation of the extra-territorial zones of the Chinese Eastern and South Manchurian railways, ruled by the St. Petersburg Ministry of Finance with its own police force. He does not seem to have heard of the decade (1907–1916) of Russo-Japanese imperialist cooperation at the expense of China, during which the two Powers by mutual agreement carved up slices of Mongolia and Manchuria.

SPEAKING of the Russian Revolution, Mr. Panikkar is of course quite right to stress the effects of the Soviet example on Asian thought —the lowering of West European prestige, the new emphasis on the economic factor and on social conflicts, the new literary trends. But he nowhere shows that he has grasped the difference between the myth of the Russian Revolution and the reality of the Soviet Union. He quotes Professor Lattimore to the effect that "there was a community of interests between the left-wing nationalists and the Bolsheviks" in Asiatic Russia. This may have been true in Outer Mongolia, on which Lattimore is a recognised authority, but of Transcaucasia, the Tatar lands, and Central Asia it is sheer nonsense. The left-wing nationalists of the Volga Tatars, the most democratic and socially advanced Moslems in the world, were ruthlessly suppressed by the Bolsheviks. Their fellows in Moslem Azerbaijan and Bokhara, and in Christian Georgia, shared their fate.

The same quotation from Lattimore distinguishes between British India, where "even British factory foremen and rank-and-file soldiers, with non-old-school-tie accents,

* *Auslandsdeutschtum* (German minorities abroad) were an important weapon of Nazi imperialism in subjecting the small countries of Central Europe and the Balkans. The Chinese minorities in Siam, Malaya, Indochina, and Indonesia were designed to fill a similar role in Chiang Kai-shek's foreign policy. Mao Tse-tung is improving on the technique of his defeated rivals.

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identified themselves with their own ruling class against all 'natives,'" and the Soviet Union, where such things could not happen. This again is nonsense. The Russian railwaymen of Tashkent, who formed the hard core of Bolshevism in Central Asia, distinguished themselves by their arrogance and brutality to the Moslem "natives," as official Bolshevik records amply show. In the years from 1921 to 1939 the degree of oppression of Asians by the Bolsheviks varied according to the general policy of the party. Its worst moments were the early years of the first Five Year Plan, when half the Kazakh nation (1,500,000 out of 3,000,000) were starved to death or driven over the Chinese border, and the Yezhov purge of 1937–38, when the Communist parties, the civil administration, and the newly created educated classes of the Asian nations were purged in their hundreds of thousands. During the Second World War whole nations were deported from their homes, on the ground that some of their number had cooperated with the German invaders and that the rest had not taken up arms against these traitors. One can well imagine what Mr. Panikkar would say had the British shot all members of the Burmese National Army which cooperated with the Japanese, and deported the rest of the Burmese nation to Arctic Canada.*

Since 1945 the Soviet régime has done its best to destroy even the dead heroes of the Asians. The Caucasian and Kirghiz leaders who fought the armies of the 19th century Tsars have been posthumously "unmasked" as British or Turkish agents. In Lenin's day, the fight against Tsarist imperialism had been regarded by Bolshevik writers as a "liberation movement." Today it is revalued as "reactionary," for conquest by Russia was an "objectively progressive" stage in the history of these nations, as it promoted their social development. The Victorian imperialist, even the Kiplingesque, nature of this argument should surely be apparent to an Indian.

ECHOES of Kipling are no coincidence. That there is a connection between imperialism and European industrialism has long been apparent, but its exact nature is not so clear. It has usually been assumed that the driving force behind both has been private capitalism and the profit motive. But there is no private capitalism in the Soviet Union, and the Soviet ruling class does not pursue profit, at least in the classical sense of the word. Rather, it seems that the process of industrialisation produces certain social types. The ruling group of a nation engaged in a rapid industrial revolution seems to possess specific tendencies—to exploit its workers, to despise and maltreat subject nations, to hate originality in thought or the arts, to surround itself with vulgar pomp and ceremony. These features marked the private bourgeoisie of Victorian England; they mark also the state bourgeoisie of Communist Russia. The differences between the two types of bourgeoisie are less important than the similarities.

The differences in the political framework are, however, decisive. The abuses of Victorian England could be gradually remedied because a free press allowed discussion of original and unpopular ideas, because freedom of association allowed workers to form and use trade unions, and because parliamentary government allowed British socialists, Irish Home-Rulers and Indian nationalists to state and pursue their aims. In Imperial Russia and Imperial Japan autocratic government made the limits of political action extremely narrow but did not completely exclude it. In the Soviet Union a totalitarian régime, which differs not only from democracy but also from autocracy of the classical type, suppresses absolutely all political or social action which is not directed by the government itself.

Totalitarian government differs from autocratic government of the classical type in two respects. First, it tells its subjects not merely what they must not do, but what they must do and say and think, in private as well as in public life. Secondly, it is restrained by absolutely no moral or religious inhibition: in practice as well

* The fate of one of these nations, the Caucasian Chechens, recalls, in the manner of its execution, the notorious massacre of Glencoe of 1692. Mr. Panikkar, with his great knowledge of British history—especially of its discreditable episodes—will appreciate the parallel. There are, however, two differences. The Campbell troops of 1692, having abused the hospitality of their victims, killed 30 persons, and their crime was followed by long protests and official inquiries in London and Edinburgh. The NKVD troops of 1944, having similarly abused the hospitality of their victims, deported 700,000 persons, killing many hundreds and allowing tens of thousands to starve or die of exposure. The action was not followed by a murmur of protest.

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as in theory, there is no limit at all to what it may do to any man or woman or child to further its aims. This is something new in history. European and Asian tyrants of the past were often cruel, but their field of action was limited by some rules, beliefs, or superstitions. Communism has no limits. The government established by the Chinese Communists seems, especially since the mass executions and inquisitions that followed the outbreak of aggression in Korea, to be following this path at a more rapid pace even than did the Soviet government which is its model.

THE people of Britain and America and of Western Europe wish the peoples of Asia well in their new independence. It is no grudging spirit that prompts the reflection that there are pitfalls ahead. It is important that the Asian leaders and the Asian intelligentsia should distinguish between real and imaginary friends and foes, examples and bogies, highways and culs-de-sac. One may hope that they will learn that nationalism is not necessarily progressive, that Asians are not necessarily brothers, or Europeans enemies, that workers can be exploited by persons who are not private capitalists, and imperialism can be the work of men not born West of the Elbe. Industrialisation, they will find, not only solves but creates problems, and first among these the problem of power: not only political, but also economic power requires its checks and balances.

Indians more than other Asians are aware of the value of liberty and of empirical methods. When Mr. Panikkar is writing of India the brilliance of his analysis and his style are persuasive. It is a pity that the wider perspective at which he aims should be distorted by his illusions regarding Russia, and by his too uncritical acceptance of scraps of Marxist or quasi-Marxist social doctrine. Perhaps only when the last vestiges of European belief in superiority to Asians, and of Asian resentment of things now past, have alike disappeared, will it be possible for European and Asian democrats to let dead dragons lie, and stand together against new, live ones.

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ABOUT OUR AUTHORS

• Americans read British magazines, and the British read American ones. But there is a difference in the quality of the matter read. The American reads *The Economist*, the *New Statesman and Nation*, the *Spectator*, *The Listener*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, etc. The Briton reads *Time* and *Life* and *Reader's Digest*—at best, the *New Yorker*. Of *Partisan Review*, *Commentary*, *Kenyon Review*, *Hudson Review* and a dozen others, he may have heard, but only the members of a small group have read them. Perhaps it is the dollar shortage. In any case, it helps explain why the name of LESLIE A. FIEDLER is relatively unknown to the British public, a situation which, beginning in this issue, we hope to remedy. Mr. Fiedler is one of the ablest of the younger American literary critics. For the past two years, he has been lecturing on American literature at the University of Rome, and has just now returned to his regular post as associate professor at the University of Montana.

• With the publication of excerpts from VIRGINIA WOOLF's diaries (the complete text will be published in book form by Hogarth Press), we begin a practice which we hope to be able to continue. While we shall certainly be on the lookout for younger talent, we would also like to get hold of material by recent masters. They represent, after all, our literary heritage, which we either accept or rebel against, but which is indubitably—and creatively—there. Next month, we shall present some hitherto unpublished letters by William Butler Yeats.

• We are indebted to Edward G. Seidenstricker for the translation of the two stories by DAZAI OSAMU. Mr. Seidenstricker is in Japan on a fellowship of the Ford Foundation, to which we are therefore, we suppose, also indirectly indebted. He has promised us further translations from modern Japanese writing for future issues of ENCOUNTER.

• About Djemila, the *Columbia-Lippincott Gazetteer of the World* gives the following bare information: "An ancient village in the Constantine department of north-east Algeria in the Tell Atlas, 20 miles north-east of Setif. It has Roman ruins, including a triumphal arch, a forum, and a temple dating back to the 3rd century A.D. Its ancient name was Cuicul." ALBERT CAMUS' essay on Djemila, presented here in English for the first time, is a work of his youth. It is interesting to observe, in comparing it with his later writing, both the development of his style from a cadenced lyricism to an intense austerity, and the permanence of his theme: death and the man.

• Belittling public opinion polls seems to be a favourite pastime of intellectuals, journalists, and politicians. This attitude is perhaps in some ways healthy, since it expresses an implicit protest against the mechanical-statistical approach to human beings and human affairs. But in part, too, it is mere snobbery, tinged with competitive envy. We do learn things from opinion polls that we would not otherwise know; and even if they are not always the most important ones, they are knowledge gained, nevertheless. NATHAN GLAZER, a leading young American sociologist, will report frequently on "What People Think." His next article will concern itself with an international survey of "the popularity of politicians."

• Photo acknowledgements
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Children at a pump
Indian street scene
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To PAUL POPPER:
Side chapel in the Nemnath temple

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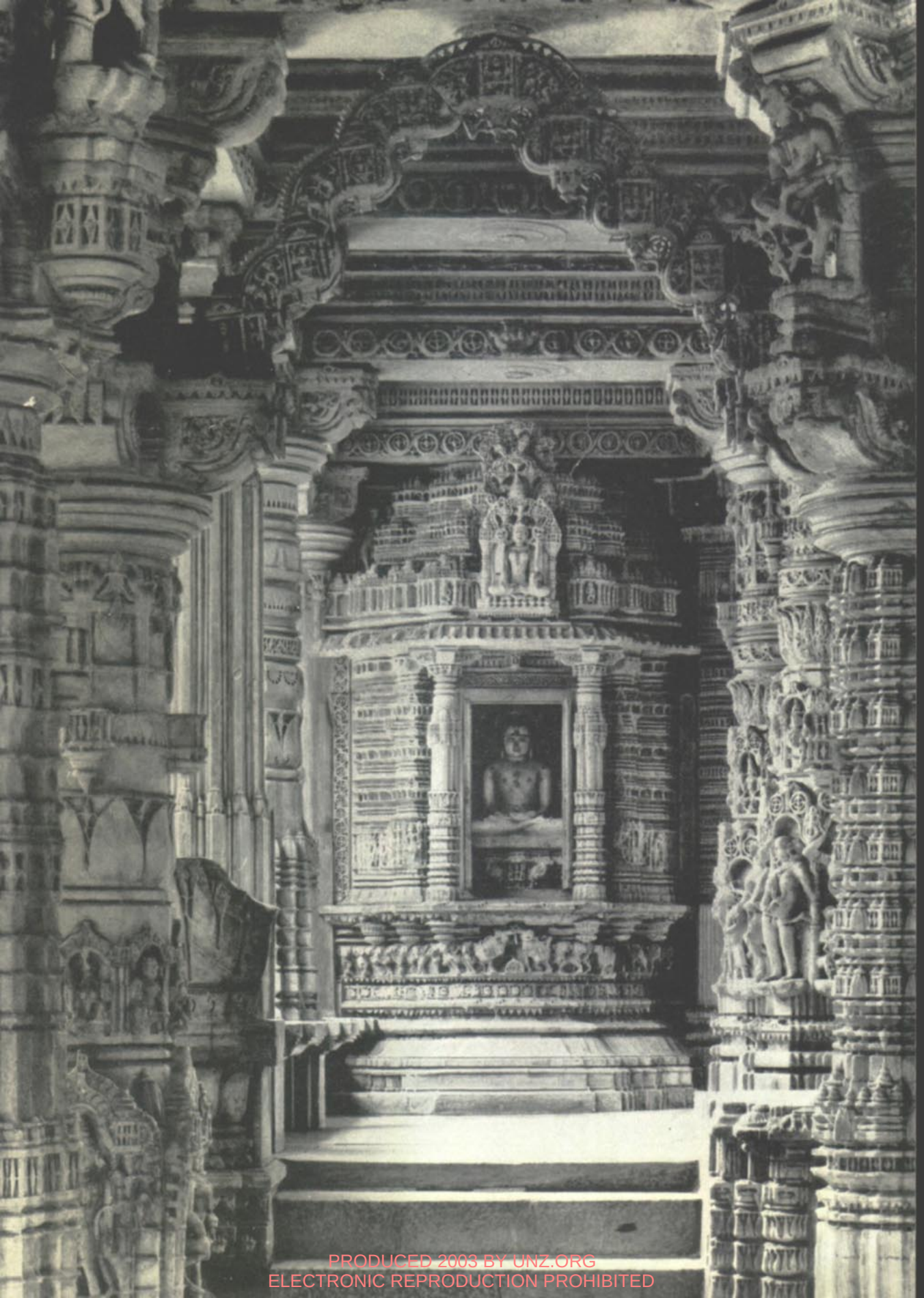

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